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SuperSoccer

WEDNESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2000

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Successful schools tour

THE Australian Schools Soccer's Boys "A" team returned last week following their successful tour of New Caledonia and Vanuatu recording four wins out of their five tour international matches.

Wins against New Caledonia's Under 17 development squad (5-0 and 10-2) were followed by last-minute wins against Vanuatu's Under 20 team (3-2 and 2-1).

The only loss was against the Vanuatu senior team 3-0.

"Despite limited preparation due to the wet weather in Sydney prior to the tour, the lads played well and were a credit to themselves and Australia," media liaison officer Richard Beazley was quoted as saying.

"Player of the Tour was Simon Bernadino from South Australia, closely followed by Chris Scuderi (Qld), Rhys Graham (WA) and Amied Shadmaan (ACT).

"The "A" team concept has once again been an outstanding success and both New Caledonia and Vanuatu federations are keen to maintain and build on our relationship arising from this initial tour."

Match One v New Caledonia Under 16s. Won 5-0
Pentecost Stadium. Noumea (24 November)
Goalscorers: Lewandowski. Fleiter. Groen, Agnello, Graham
Lineup: Ghotb (Scarsella 45). Shadmaan, Klarica, Arena, Groen (Graham 45). Cibescu. Bernadino, Scuderi, Alves, Lewandowski (Agnello 45), Fleiter.
Match Two v New Caledonia Under 16s. Won 10-2
Pentecost Stadium, Noumea (26 November)
Goalscorers: Mitchell 5, Fleiter 2, Bernadino, Scuderi, Graham
Lineup: Ghotb (Scarsella 68), Groen, Shadmaan, Klarica, Cibescu (Arena 52), Agnello, Scuderi, Bernadino, Alves, Graham, Mitchell (Fleiter 52).
Match Three v Vanuatu U20s. Won 3-2
Korman Stadium, Port Vila (28 November)
Goalscorers : Graham, Mitchell, Lewandowski
Lineup : Scarsella, Shadmaan, Klarica, Arena, Agnello (Lewandowski 70). Groen (Bernadino 68), Scuderi, Cibescu, Graham, Mitchell (Alves 85). Fleiter (Ghotb 82).
Match Four v Vanuatu U20s. Won 2-1
Korman Stadium, Port Vila (30 November)
Goalscorers: Graham, Fleiter
Lineup: Ghotb, Shadmaan, Klarica, Arena, Cibescu (Groen 55), Scuderi, Bernadino, Alves, Graham (Agnello 72), Mitchell (Fleiter 65), *Lewandowski.*
Match Five v Vanuatu U20s. Lost 0-3
Korman Stadium, Port Vila (2 December)
Lineup: Scarsella (Ghotb 45), Shadmaan, Klarica, Scuderi (Cibescu 45), Arena, Agnello, Groen, Bernadino, Alves, Lewandowski (Scarsella 80), Fleiter (Mitchell 72).

FORMER SYDNEY NSL PLAYER FOUND GUILTY OF MATCH FIXING

A FORMER NSL player was sentenced last Friday to five months jail after being found guilty of fixing matches in Singapore's local league.

Mirko Jurilj, 27, who had once played for Sydney United, clutched rosary beads and cried as Judge Foo Chee Hock passed the sentence.

His mother Mila Jurilj and several family friends gasped and sobbed as the sentence was read.

Jurilj was found guilty on three charges of accepting bribes from Singapore bookie Sivakumar Madasamy, who bet on two games in which Jurilj played.

The judge allowed the sentence to be deferred until December 29 after Jurilj's family posted 20,000 Singapore dollars ($A20,920) for a total bail of 120,000 Singapore dollars ($A126,600).

Jurilj's lawyer said the player may appeal the sentence.

"Justice has to be served," Jurilj said after posting bail, adding that the courts should be going after Madasamy, not him.

"He's the one they should be getting - a self-confessed bookie," Jurilj said.

Madasamy was not immediately available for comment.

Judge Foo said foreign players were meant to raise the standard of Singapore's soccer league, but Jurilj had "tarnished the image."

None of the bets was successful and there was no evidence showing any matches had been influenced, so the defence argued that the league had not suffered.

Foo said the defence "failed to raise any doubt" about Jurilj's guilt.

Jurilj's lawyer, SS Dhillon, had pleaded for leniency, asking the judge to impose a "hefty fine" instead of jail time.

The prosecution's case was based on Madasamy's testimony and a confession signed by the Australian while in detention.

Jurilj said investigating officers coerced him into signing. The judge rejected the claim. The confession, signed on July 31, said Jurilj had agreed to help Madasamy fix three matches, but had lost the bets on each game.

Jurilj claimed that he was disoriented when he signed the confession because officers had kept him awake for more than 24 hours.

He also said they had promised him freedom if he signed.

The attorneys for Jurilj produced his bank records in his trial to show he had not received large amounts of money.

The 27-year-old player had denied the charges. H

In a confession signed on July 31, Jurilj said he had agreed to help Madasamy fix three matches, but had lost the bets on each game.

His defence lawyers tried unsuccessfully to have the statement thrown out.

Prosecutors pressed Jurilj to explain why he let Madasamy into his apartment and why he loaned him $US570 ($A1,052) if he didn't trust him.

"I didn't think he was going to do any harm coming to our apartment, even though I didn't trust him," he said.

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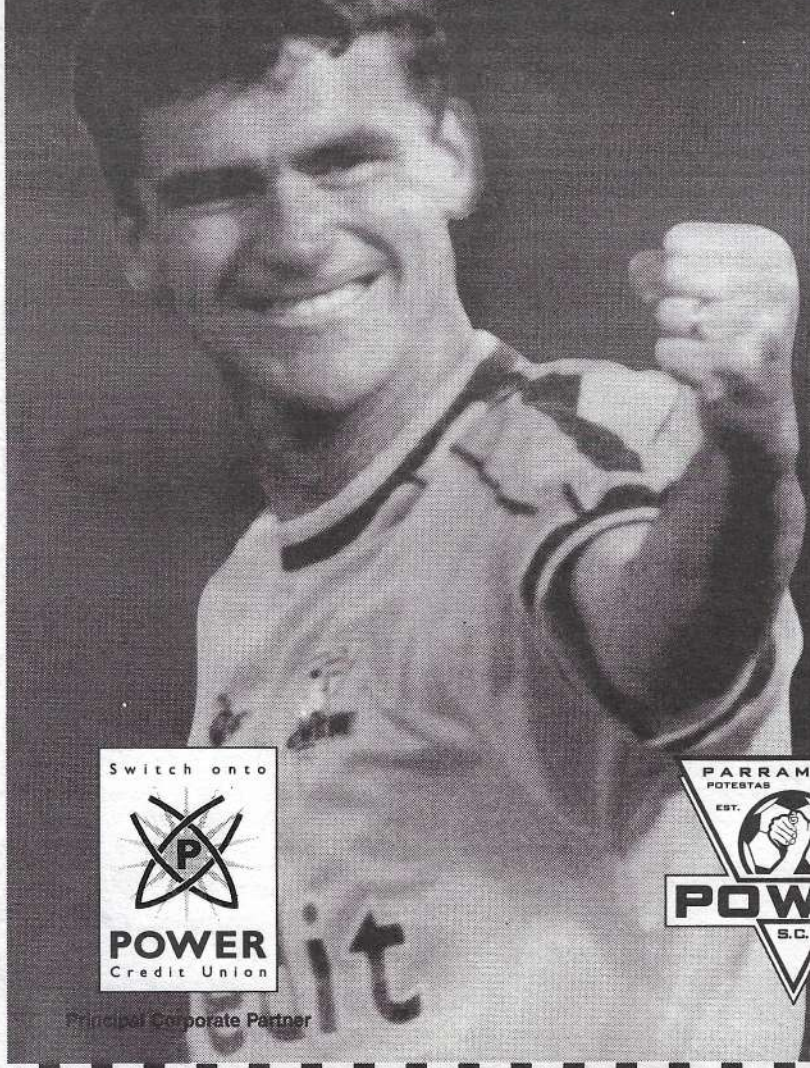

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Man United to tour Asia again

ENGLISH glamour club Manchester United has confirmed they will send their top squad on its Asian tour next July.

"The tour will be considered pre-season training, and not an end of season party," the English glamour club's chief executive Peter Kenyon said.

The opening match will be played in Kuala Lumpur on July 21, followed by other fixtures in Singapore on July 24 and Bangkok on July 28.

United have been criticised for providing a full-strength squad for previous Asian tours but Kenyon denied that would be the case in 2001 which would probably be the Asian farewell for celebrated manager Sir Alex Ferguson.

"It will be the first team squad, and it will be Sir Alex's choice of what will be the line up," Kenyon said, refusing to speculate whether stars such as David Beckham, Fabien Barthez, Andy Cole and Teddy Sheringham would make the trip.

But Kenyon added: "With the 100 per cent likelihood it will be the last season with Sir Alex in charge there will be an enormous level of commitment from this team.

"Many of our supporters will never have the opportunity of getting to Old Trafford.

"This is part of a plan that we take Manchester United out."

The tour in July will take in Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand as part of the club's eight pre-season games although there is strong speculation that Australia will be added to the itinerary.

The club is no stranger to the region after paying visits in 1995, 1997 and 1999.

"Outside of World Cup years we brought our team to Asia, which we think is very positive and it's on the back of a very, very strong and very large supporter base of Manchester United," Kenyon added.

The Socceroos' marketing partner, International Entertainment Corporation (IEC), was keen to lure Manchester United back to Australia.

IEC has the rights to market the Australian national team and organise tours and was behind the last United trip in June 1999.

"We are in negotiations with them, we're talking to them about 2001 and 2002," IEC managing director Dominic Galati told *SuperSoccer*.

"We'd like them to come back, they had a great experience in Australia with us previously, we treated them well.

"They loved Australia but it's more of a business proposition for them.

"They set up a lot of stores in Asia and any tour is for two-fold reasons - it's to prepare their team and promote their stores."

United is listed on the London Stock Exchange, with merchandising its key source of revenue and Asia as a readily exploitable market.

With a lower population, Australia was a less profitable prospect for the club shareholders.

Soccer Australia chief executive David Woolley said negotiations with club sides was largely left in the hands of IEC.

"Someone like Manchester United are a top drawer club and we'd be interested in seeing if there is any scope (for an Australian visit)," Woolley said.

The last Red Devils tour of Australia was shrouded in controversy, with captain Roy Keane, star player David Beckham and manager Sir Alex Ferguson failing to make the trip to the anger of organisers and fans.

A gruesome tackle by striker Andy Cole on Socceroo midfielder Simon Colosimo caused knee damage severe enough for the Carlton player to miss most of the following season.

"We went through some difficulties last time and we'd need to be sure that didn't happen next time," Woolley said.

"The public deserve better entertainment value than they've had in the past and we are very mindful of that.

"As far as the club was concerned it didn't create any animosity with Soccer Australia or soccer in Australia."

And Manchester United have been ranked as the world's richest football club for the third year running in the Deloitte and Touche/FourFourTwo Rich List survey announced last week.

United took the top spot ahead of Bayern Munich -- beaten in the last minutes of the Champion's League Final in 1999 by the English champions -- runners up in the survey, which is based on the 1998/1999 season.

Bayern's turnover of 83.5 million pounds was 33 percent less than Manchester United's, whose success in winning the UK soccer treble - the Champion's League, the English Premier League and the FA Cup - helped push turnover that year up to 110.9 million pounds.

The Premiership dominated the list with eight clubs, including Chelsea, Arsenal and Liverpool, in the top 20 of the world's richest clubs. Scotland's top clubs Celtic and Rangers also bolstered the UK contingent.

"English clubs have a financial advantage over their continental rivals in owning their grounds. This brings other potential revenue streams to the 'kicks and mortar' business model," said Gerry Boon, partner in charge at Deloitte & Touche Sport.

Gate receipts were still the largest part of Premiership club revenues, but executive boxes have become an essential part of income, the survey said.

"The average Premiership club earns enough from its executive boxes to pay three players' wages, so the 'prawn sandwich contingent' is essential to English clubs' financial success," said FourFourTwo editor Michael Hann.

United captain Roy Keane recently complained about the number of corporate fans coming to matches.

COVER PICTURE

PARRAMATTA POWER skipper Alex Tobin is no in the record books equaling Sergio Melta's all-time NSL appearance record. **PIC Nick Vasic**

Door closed for Aussie star Foxe at West Ham

A FURIOUS West Ham Football Club looks certain to launch legal action after British authorities again refused Socceroo defender Hayden Foxe a work permit.

The Department of Employment last week rejected West Ham's request for an unprecedented third appeal against its refusal of a work permit for the 23-year-old Australian.

"The department considers that there is no new relevant or compelling evidence which would merit a third hearing," a department spokeswoman said.

"The club has had two previous opportunities to present any relevant evidence."

Foxe, 23, an international regular when fitness permits, signed a lucrative four-year deal with the east London club almost five months ago but has waited unsuccessfully for a work permit since.

His initial application and first appeal were rejected under quality control rules for soccer imports stipulating they must have played in 75 per cent of their country's internationals in the previous two years.

A second appeal, backed by Socceroo coach Frank Farina's claim that Foxe would have met the requirement if not for injuries, was also rejected.

The decision is a further blow to the Hammers' hopes of hanging on to Foxe, who last month threatened to quit England and try to find a club in Europe if West Ham could not secure him a work permit by the end of the month.

Foxe has not played a game in eight weeks, since the Socceroos played a four-nations tournament in Dubai following Australia's ill-fated Olympic campaign.

The club would make no comment, with a spokesman saying an announcement would be made when the club had considered its options.

But West Ham manager Harry Redknapp last week branded the British work permit system crooked and threatened legal action.

"It's a scandal and a disgrace that we haven't got it yet but I will take it to court - or anywhere I have got to take it," Redknapp said.

Foxe is still in Sydney and is said to be on the verge of a move to Italy.

His brother Damian plays for NSW Premier League side Blacktown City, which is linked to West Ham through an apprenticeship scheme.

NSW Premier League

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Round 7 Fixtures

Friday 15 December

FIRST GRADE: KICK OFF 8pm, UNDER 19s: 6pm

Central Coast v Blacktown City	Woy Woy

Saturday 16 December

FIRST GRADE: KICK OFF 6.30pm, UNDER 19s: 4.30pm

Canterbury Marrickville v Belconnen	Henson Park

FIRST GRADE: KICK OFF 7pm, UNDER 19s: 5pm

Penrith v St George	Nepean Rugby Club
Leichhardt v Parramatta	Lambert Park
Bonnyrigg v Sutherland	Serbian Centre

RE-SCHEDULED FIXTURE

Wednesday 13 December

FIRST GRADE: KICK OFF 8pm, UNDER 19s: 6pm

Bonnyrigg v Parramatta Eagles	Serbian Centre

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A *SuperSoccer* special ..... Oceania Football Confederation Under-17 Qualifiers

It's goals, goals, goals in Samoa as Joeys march on to the World Cup final

MATCH 1: 5 December
AMERICAN SAMOA 0 AUSTRALIA 30

AUSTRALIA recorded it's highest ever score in international soccer competition, trouncing American Samoa 30-0, in it's first match of the Oceania Football Confederation Under-17 Qualifiers, in Samoa.

The LG Joeys scored five hat-tricks in the effort, with 16-year-old striker Terry Smith putting away eight of the thirty goals.

Sean Walsh put the first Australian goal on the board in the fifth minute, and went on to score another two.

Ben Stevens picked up a hat-trick while Smith's first effort was rewarded in the 12th minute.

Fred Agius scored in the 22nd before completing his stash of 6 goals in the 73rd, Jay Lucas netted four, with single goals and one own goal making up the Australian tally.

American Samoa's cause was not helped by the red-carding of a player in the 10th minute, the player judged to have been the last man in defence, bringing down Fred Agius on his way to goal.

Australia's previous record stood at 24-0, hit up against Vanuatu in 1989, again by the Under-17s.

Terry Smith's effort fell two goals short of the record set by Matthew Zec in the same game, when he found the back of the net 10 times.

Coach Ange Postecoglou was obviously pleased with the result, but more so with the team's all round performance, than with the final scoreline.

"Obviously the boys did really well out there, but the important thing is that they did the right thing through to the end," he said after the match.

"Instead of being selfish in front of goals, because it could have been very easy for them to start showing off, or playing individually, they kept passing the ball around, and kept their discipline right to the end.

"While we certainly didn't expect thirty goals - that's one every three minutes - this game was always going to be the easiest of the group, and with the boys in the frame of mind they were in before the game, itching to play and get stuck in, it showed tonight, the enthusiasm really paid off," he continued.

"Of course it didn't help that American Samoa had a player sent off, but to be honest, I don't think that it made that much of a difference to the scoreline."

AUSTRALIA 30
(Sean Walsh 5' 28' 50', Ben Stevens 7' 41' 48', Terry Smith 12' 32' 52' 61' 64' 81' 84' 87', Fred Agius 22' 26' 35' 56' 59' 73' , Jay Lucas 43' 54' 69' 71', own goal 58' Brett Studman 62', Carl Valeri 65', Mario Karlovic 75', Michael Brown 76', Predrag Bojic 85')
AMERICAN SAMOA 0
AUSTRALIA: Nathan Coe (gk); Alex Wilkinson, Predrag Bojic, Brett Studman; Ben Stevens (Massimo Murdocca 75'), Mario Karlovic (Anthony Danze 78'), Carl Valeri (capt) Sean Walsh (Michael Brown 75'), Fred Agius; Jay Lucas, Terry Smith.

MATCH 2: 7 December
PAPUA NEW GUINEA 0 AUSTRALIA 7

THE LG Joeys cored a comfortable 7-0 win over Papua New Guinea, in their second match of the Oceania Football Confederation Under-17 Qualifiers, in Samoa.

Coach Ange Postecoglou made five changes to the Australian line-up which won the first match 30-0 two days before, with Papua New Guinea proving a slightly more formidable opponent than American Samoa.

Midfielder Sean Walsh once again got things going in the fifth minute, side footing the ball past the keeper after a cross from Matthew Engele, to open Australia's account.

Engele himself was next, in the 14th minute, with his strike partner Brett Holman beating three defenders and shooting hard and low past the keeper in the 37th minute, to make it a 3-0 half-time scoreline to the Joeys.

The Australian assault continued into the second half, defender Alex Wilkinson heading in Australia's fourth in the 67th minute from an Agius free kick, and on the spot again three minutes later, heading in from a Massimo Murdocca corner.

In between, Anthony Danze found time to put his name on the scoreboard, while Walsh finished the game the way he started, slotting Australia's final goal home with a volley in the 83rd minute for 7-0.

"The boys played well for the most part, although really, we could have had another seven or eight goals," said Postecoglou after the match.

"They were under a little pressure today, knowing that if we lost, our campaign would be over, because Papua New guinea had won both of its previous games, so it was good to see they that they coped with the pressure well, it didn't affect them too much and overall, I was pleased with the way they handled the match.

"Papua New Guinea was definitely a better quality opposition than American Samoa, and they've been the surprise packet of the tournament so far, beating the Solomon Islands and Samoa, games which they were probably expected to lose.

"All in all it was a good effort on our part, the boys getting their first run played well.

"I'm using this tournament to look at all of the players, and when you play four games in seven days, you're always going to rotate the squad, so it's a matter of giving a rest to some, and having a good look at everyone."

AUSTRALIA 7 (Sean Walsh 5' 83', Matthew Engele 14', Brett Holman 37', Alex Wilkinson 67' 70', Anthony Danze 69')
PAPUA NEW GUINEA 0

AUSTRALIA: Nathan Coe (gk); Alex Wilkinson, Rodney Madigan, Brett Studman; Sean Walsh, Massimo Murdocca, Carl Valeri (capt) (Michael Brown 78'), Anthony Danze (Steve Baveas 71'), Fred Agius (Russell Waller 68'); Matthew Engele, Brett Holman.

SATURDAY 16 DECEMBER

PREMIER LEAGUE SOCCER

CANTERBURY MARRICKVILLE

v

BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS

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First Grade Kick Off 6.30pm
Youth Grade Kick off 4.30pm

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MATCH 3: 9 December
SOLOMON ISLANDS 0 AUSTRALIA 1

Australia faced its toughest competition yet at the Oceania Football Confederation Under-17 Qualifiers, a goal in the final minutes leading the Joeys to a 1-0 victory over the Solomon Islands.

Second half replacement Anthony Danze was the hero for the LG Joeys, netting the winner in the 88th minute, in a more evenly matched game for Australia.

The Joeys are now all but through to the next stage of the Qualifiers, a two-legged play off against the winner of Group B, which will be known in March next year.

"They made it pretty hard for us out there today, but I'm very pleased with the way the boys handled themselves," said coach Ange Postecoglou after the game.

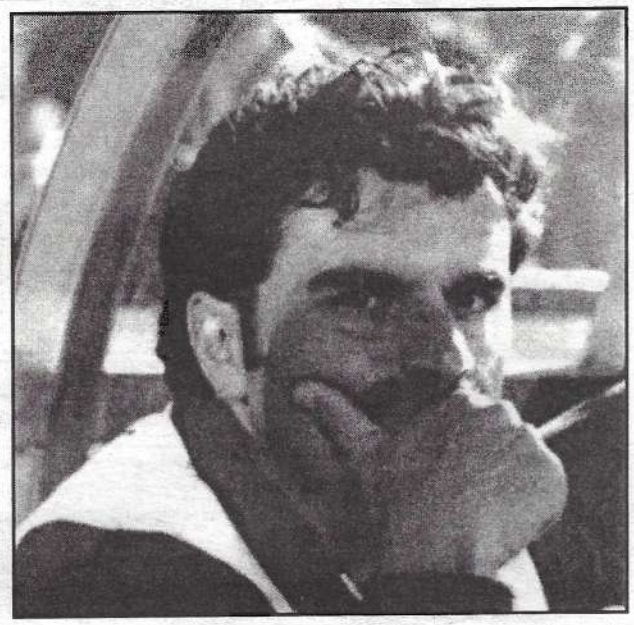
"The Solomons played defensively, but our team didn't give up until the last minute, they kept doing the right thing, and it finally paid off.

"Our opposition sat back for the entire game, and we found it hard to break them down, but I was never really worried that we were in danger of losing the match.

"At halftime, I told the boys to keep persisting with the way they had through the first half, to be patient, that sometimes we will have games like this and to not to get frustrated, they did exactly that in the second half and to their credit, got the goal.

"Our last game is against Samoa, and unless someone can make up 40 goals or so we're through, so I'll just continue using this opportunity to see players in match positions," Postecoglou (above concluded.

AUSTRALIA 1 (Anthony Danze 88')
SOLOMON ISLANDS 0
Yellow Cards: Carl Valeri 67'
AUSTRALIA: Jacob Rex (gk); Rodney Madigan, Carl Valeri (capt), Predrag Bojic; Michael Brown, Russell Waller (Anthony Danze 46'), Steven Baveas, Ben Stevens (Massimo Murdocca 69'), Mario Karlovic; Brett Holman (Matthew Engele 65'), Terry Smith.



FINAL MATCH:

Australia Vs Samoa (final group game)
Date: Monday 11th December (Samoa)/Tuesday 12th December (Australia)

Details not available at press time.

FOOTBALL PATROL ..... FOOTBALL PATROL ..... FOOT-

This year's WNSL Grand Final will feature as the third of a tripleheader of top matches—QAS v NSWIS (NYL), Brisbane Strikers v Auckland Kingz and WNSL.

Sports psychologist KIERAN MORROW has recently been added to the Canberra Cosmos technical staff.

Morrow has had sessions with the team on mental toughness preparing the players for their role as a professional within the wider Cosmos organisation.

Coach Tom Sermanni believes that Morrow "has had a positive impact on the team, from both an individual and team perspective".

CHRIS JACKSON (Football Kingz), PETER DWYER (Brisbane Strikers), SEBASTIAN SINOZIC (Sydney Olympic) and ANTHONY MAGNACCA (Newcastle United) all played their 50th NSL games last weekend.

NSL Injuries;
Northern Spirit
R Slater (foot - 2 weeks)
Marconi
J Gibson (groin - 1 week)
N Tome (shin - 3 weeks)
M Smith (groin - 2 weeks)
R Bove (knee - season)
S Radulovic (ankle - 2 weeks)
Adelaide City
L Brain (knee - 4 weeks)
N Sabljak (achilles - 6 months)
Calrton
J Tricarico (hamstring - two months)
M Atkinson (back - 2 weeks)
Newcastle United
A Harper (toe - 2 weeks)
E Masi (knee - 3 weeks)
D Smith (groin - 3 weeks)
Sydney Olympic
A Juric (thigh - 1week)
A Moric (groin - 3 weeks)
S Baillie (calf - 2 weeks)
K Marusic (hip - 1 week)
Parramatta Power
M Byrnes (foot - 6 weeks)
L Campbell (ankle - 1 week)
L Pogliacomi (back - 1 week)

Sydney United has almost completed the new Boka Stand dressing rooms and gymnasium.

Following recent discussions with the Shanghai 2000 AFC, Power players Luke Roodenberg and Lachlan Campbell, will participate in a tournament in Shanghai, from December 12.

TWO football number plates which have seen around the traps in recent weeks are OLYROO and GERS.

FORMER Australian national women's coach STEVE DARBY is currently on the short list at Sheffield Wednesday for a top coaching spot.

23 March 2001 is the closing date for 2001 Women's Sport and Recreation Administration Scholarship Program.

Conducted by the NSW Department of Sport and Recreation. Program areas include a comprehensive residential-based training program in sports administration and management and an international travel scholarship to attend an international working party meetings or international conference.

For further information contact Debora Kanak on (02) 9923 4251.

Wollongong's Joey international JAY LUCAS will join English club Southampton when he turns 17.

DINO MENNILLO recently trialed with Scottish Premier League club Dundee United.

Blacktown City's ZAC DONEV is likely to be out of action for quite some time.

He was forced to come off in the match against St George last Saturday with a broken bone in his foot.

The injury was so bad that the bone burst through Donev's foot skin.

Belconnen's MICHAEL LEMEZINA has staked his claim for a first team birth by scoring both goals and should have had a hat-trick in the Blue Devils Under 19s 5-2 loss.

Former Canberra City player OSCAR LANGONE has been appointed coach of Belconnen United's ACT Premier League side.

Oscar's son Leo currently plays in Belconnen's Blue Devils NSW Premier League side and is a former River Player youth player.

A LAST minute decision to re-turf North Power Stadium has led to Central Coast's next Premier League match being switched to Woy Woy.

Club officials are said to be distressed at the lack of notice given by ground staff.

Schwarzer wants to put past behind him

SOCCEROO goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer is prepared to put his three-year feud with former national coach Terry Venables behind.

El Tel has taken over the struggling Middlesbrough team.

Schwarzer was bitterly disappointed when Venables left him out of Australia's failed World Cup campaign and the pair have not spoken since the former England manager finished his duties with the Socceroos in late 1997.

A year later, Schwarzer wrote scathingly of Venables' reign, saying of the coach's last game: "I wouldn't want to play because I've had nothing but bad experiences with him and I'm glad he's going ... Hopefully it will mean a shake-up within the national set-up over in Australia."

He accused Venables of leaving him out of the team because he chose to play for 'Boro in the 1996-97 season rather than in a Socceroos friendly, while Mark Bosnich was allowed to miss a friendly when playing for Aston Villa in a UEFA Cup match against Bordeaux.

He also queried Venables' role in the transfer of Socceroo players to Venables' then club Portsmouth, which became the subject of a lengthy inquiry, saying it seemed like a conflict of interest to him.

But on the eve of Venables' arrival at Middlesbrough as emergency coach for the rest of the season, Schwarzer said the two men could work together.

"I said a few things and at the time they were how I felt," Schwarzer told *SuperSoccer*.

"Obviously now it's a couple of years down the track and while those things were right at that time, we've got no problems now."

Schwarzer admitted to a bit of trepidation about the future but said he would just have to wait and see what happened.

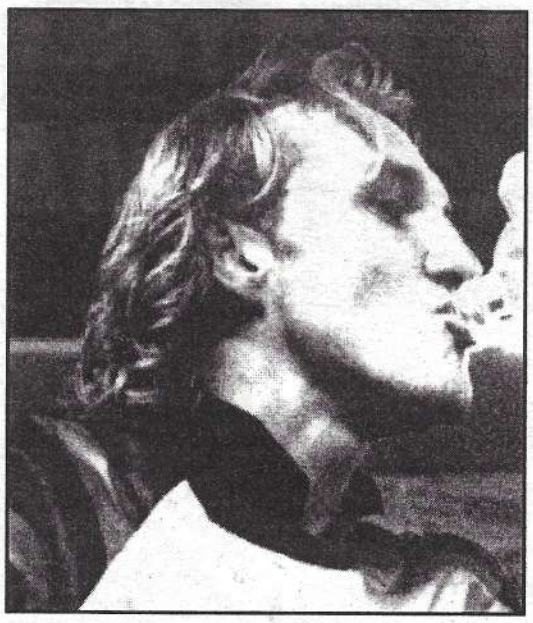
"I've got absolutely no indication of how things are going to be," he said.

"I'm contracted to the club for another four years and obviously he's going to be there.

"Things like this happen and you've just got to let them go and move on.

"I'm not going to hold any grudges.

"I've been playing for the club for three or four years now regularly and as long as I keep doing that, I won't have any problems."



Middlesbrough is in equal last spot on the ladder, 28 points adrift of leader Manchester United and facing relegation for the second time since 1997.

Schwarzer said everyone at the club, from the staff to the players, was looking forward to the change.

"We're all quite excited about the calibre of someone like Terry Venables coming in to coach. He's a very renowned coach," he said.

FOOTNOTE: Terry Venables return to Premiership management was condemned to a 1-0 defeat following a Mark Schwarzer blunder.

The goalkeeping howler saw Schwarzer allow a shot from Sunderland's Michael Gray to trickle under his body.

It was 'Boro's eighth defeat in nine league games and sent to bottom spot on the table.

Ziras takes Berries spot

Canterbury Marrickville has announced that former Canterbury Marrickville and Sydney Olympic player Jim Ziras is the new Head Coach at Henson Park.

Last week Canterbury and former coach Jimmy Patikas ended their association.

Basil behind in poll

THE vote for the presidency of Oceania will be held today (Wednesday).

Favourite in the voting, which will include Soccer Australia chairman Bail Scarsella, is Johnny Tinsley Lulu, the current stand-in president from Vanuatu.

Scarsella (Australia), Tautulu Roebuck (Samoa) and Adrian Wickham (Solomon Islands) are the other candidates.

Nicholson signs for Wolves

The Wollongong Wolves have signed English midfieider Max Nicholson for the remainder of the season.

The 29-year-old has been trialling for the last month and his experience will be more than useful as the Wolves try to emulate last season's unprecedented success.

Nicholson has played over 200 league games in England for Doncaster Rovers, Hereford United and Scunthorpe United.

For the past four years he has been plying his trade in Singapore where he has scored over 30 goals and was voted Player of the Year in 1997.

Goodwill raffle

IN A goodwill gesture, all members of the Sydney Olympic senior and junior playing squads, and administration have donated $1,300.00 to raise funds for former Sydney Olympic player Simon Brandt who is suffering from cancer.

Brandt played alongside Olympic CEO, Peter Raskopoulos, who said "Simon was an excellent hardworking player, a great person off the field and on behalf of myself and the Club, we wish him a speedy recovery".

A raffle was held at Olympic's home game on Sunday against Parramatta Power.

All proceeds of the raffle are being donated to Simon Brandt.

The prize is a signed Sydney Olympic jersey.

Wehrman absence causes rift at Glory

PERTH Glory soccer coach Bernd Stange is seething following a decision by the club board to allow star player Kasey Wehrman to continue to trial in Europe.

Stange said the board decision had disrupted his team plans for the national soccer league season.

"It's very strange to have a senior team player away for five or six weeks and then there is still no decision, it has definitely disrupted our team plans," he said.

Wehrman is currently on trial in the Netherlands with PSV Eindhoven.

"I am upset that he has been away for so long, to me it's very strange as he is a professional player with Perth Glory and he is away for so long," Stange said.

"Now the board of Perth Glory have given him permission to stay on.

"They have over-ruled what I want, we should not be making it so easy for overseas clubs to be keeping our players.

"There is obviously a gap between my opinion as a coach and the board of Perth Glory."

Rangers Under 21s to tour Down Under

As exclusively reported in *SuperSoccer* last week Scottish champion club Glasgow Rangers will send their youth side to tour Australia in January.

Rangers will play a Premier league Under 20 side bolstered by a few NSL players at North Sydney on January 16.

other matches include against Northern Spirit NYL tea (Gosford January 6), Young Socceroos (Canberra January 9) and against Northern Spirit (North Sydney January 13).

Blacktown City coach Brian Brown will lead the Under 20 side in the January 16 game.

www.nswpremierleague.com

Panthers consolidate

AT their AGM held last month Penrith Panthers President Alan Perkins provided his report on the previous year, and his goals for the new season and beyond.

Perkins stated that he was extremely proud of the achievements that his Club had taken during it's brief ten years in existence.

He said that the unit had risen to the highest level available in the State, and in it's first year in Super League had performed extremely well and their mid table placement was well on target that was set at the start of the year.

Perkins also raised his disappointment that the structure of the new Premier League resulted in the Panthers having to release a number of their talented 2000 winter squad players.

But he felt confident that the Panthers' work with fellow Federation Clubs would provide these players a number of opportunities to progress their future.

Reporting on the 2000 Youth League and Cadet League squad's performances, Perkins stated that he was extremely impressed with the efforts and thanked all that were involved.

The Panthers president also said that while the start to the Premier League season was not great, that he was confident that the long-term outcome would be as planned, with another mid table placement being the target.

Head Coach and former Socceroo great Stan Ackerley has a blend of experience and youth in his squad.

At the AGM the following officer were elected or announced as being part of the 2000/2001 Panthers' Committee:

President: Alan Perkins
Senior Vice President: Mike Starr
Junior Vice President: Kevin Gaskin
Secretary: Glynis Gaskin
Treasurer: Glen Tyrrell
Head Coach: Stan Ackerley
Youth League/Cadet League Convenor: Bruce Eldridge
Assistant Youth League/Cadet League Convenor: Gerry Baker
Registrar: Gerry Baker
Publicity Officer: Fran Tyrrell
Media Officer(s): Glen Tyrrell, Mike Starr, Fran Tyrrell and Brett Tyrrell.
Committee Members: Stewart McPherson and Barry Wells

Treasurer Bev Zalewski opted to leave the Committee due to family commitments after two years of hard work.

The 2000 season represents the Penrith Panther Soccer Club's tenth year (overall) in existence.

Within the past ten years the club has progressed from playing locally, to play in NSWSF competitions (1990), and in the year 2000 was promoted to the Super League.

Penrith Panthers was founded in 1990 and entered the ranks of the NSWSF in 6th division.

In 1996 the club progressed to first division, introduced its youth league teams in division 2 and established it women's sides.

In 1999 the club established its cadet league teams and secured a first division premiership.

On the back of its 1999 premiership win Penrith Panthers soccer club realised one of its long term goals and progressed into the Super League.

First graders Ben Weight and Danny Hinton with the new Penrith Panthers black strip.

PRESSURE OFF THE BOIL

PARRAMATTA Eagles coach Tam Finlayson confesses to a huge sense of relief after his side recently beat Central Coast.

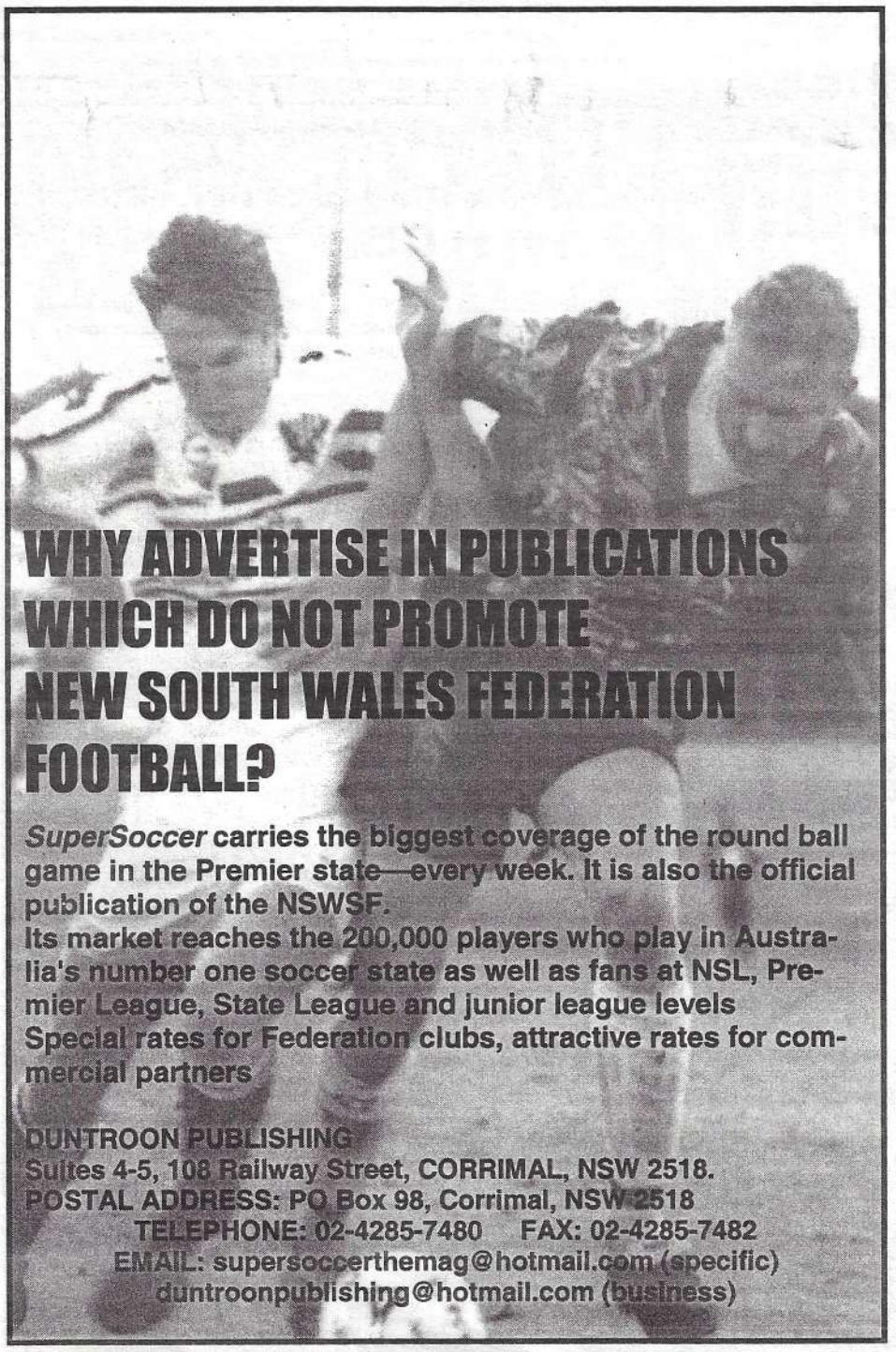
"It was one of those games where we did everything right but their 'keeper was just outstanding," he said. "When we finally did score it was just such a huge sense of relief and I felt all that pressure that had been building up suddenly come off.

"But if we hadn't scored then that would have been fair enough because it was one of those games where you throw everything at the goalie and he is just brilliant.

"We finally got a goal from a Conde header because the ground was wet and it skidded off the surface. That was maybe the only way we were going to beat Darren Moore, he was great."

Nikas On The Move

TOP Canterbury star Jimmy Nikas is reportedly on the move. The unsettled player wants away from the Sydney Premier League club and Canterbury is reportedly putting an $8,000 price tag on his contract.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WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK IN FOOTBALL

NSW PREMIER LEAGUE
ROUND 7
Friday 15 December
Canterbury Marrickville v Belconnen
Saturday 16 December
Penrith v St George
Leichhardt v Parramatta
Bonnyrigg v Sutherland
Central Coast v Blacktown City

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE
ROUND 10
Friday 15 December
Newcastle Utd v South Melbourne
Saturday 16 December
Parramatta Power v Eastern Pride
Canberra Cosmos v Sydney Olympic
Brisbane Strikers v Kingz
Wollongong Wolves v Sydney United
Marconi Stallions v Adelaide City
Sunday 17 December
Melbourne Knights v Northern Spirit
Carlton v Perth Glory

NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE
ROUND 10
Friday 15 December
Newcastle United v Marconi Stallions Colts
Saturday 16 December
QAS v NSWIS
Canberra Cosmos v Sydney Olympic Youth
Wollongong Wolves v Sydney United
Sunday 17 December
Sydney Olympic Academy v Northern Spirit
Marconi Stallions Youth v AIS
Parramatta Power v Newcastle United Colts
BYE: ACT Academy

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Transfer issue drags on at Riviera summit

By Michael Mann in Brussels & Ian Geoghegan in Nice

THE European Commission on Friday called on the football authorities to clarify their proposals on the future of player transfers before this week's 11th-hour meeting between the two sides.

Experts from the FIFA-led Task Force will meet Commission officials in Brussels on Wednesday morning (today) in a bid to negotiate a new transfer system before the Commission declares FIFA's existing regulations illegal.

The talks replace a session which was due to take place last week, which was cancelled after FIFA failed to provide further details of its plans as requested by the Commission.

"We've not had those clarifications yet, so we felt there was no point in going over old ground," said Commission spokeswoman Amelia Torres.

Manchester United director Maurice Watkins and UEFA general secretary Gerhard Aigner were among those who had already travelled to the Belgian capital before the delay was announced.

A preparatory meeting between UEFA and representatives of the major European leagues went ahead anyway.

Privately, UEFA are concerned that FIFA - the only body the EC legally recognise in the present transfer wrangle - are trying to distance themselves from recent suggestions made by the official Transfer Taskforce and are trying to arrange a deal with European players' union FIFPro.

FIFPro pulled out of negotiations with the Taskforce because they claimed their interests were being ignored.

Among their beliefs is that contracts should be signed for a maximum of two years, with 'compensation' fees being determined by the length of time remaining on the contract multiplied by the amount of money the player is being paid per year.

Any compromise would dramatically alter the Taskforce's proposals and be met with anger by UEFA, who have taken the lead in most behind-the-scenes discussions on the issue because they believe FIFA have dragged their heels since the EC raised legal concerns over the present system nearly two years ago.

"We are dismayed and concerned about the postponement," said UEFA communications director Mike Lee.

"We were not consulted about it and a number of our officials had already flown to Brussels.

"It is very frustrating that a lot of work has been done since October 31 and clear answers have been given on the issues where the EC required clarification.

"We are surprised that those answers have not been put forward.

"UEFA and the European leagues are determined to make progress and we will continue to work to reach a solution on this issue as soon as possible."

The sport's leading figures fear soccer will be plunged into chaos if the Commission outlaws FIFA's rules, putting the financial squeeze on small clubs and prompting a free-for-all as players move between clubs at will.

The Commission argues the existing set-up breaks European Union laws on fair competition and the right of all workers to ply their trade freely in the 15-nation bloc.

The efforts to find a compromise coincide with a decisive summit of EU leaders in the French resort of Nice, which is due to approve a declaration on sport's "special status", but will fall short of exempting sport from EU law.

The Commission said earlier it was hopeful of finding a satisfactory solution to the long-simmering dispute.

It said it recognised the validity of rules designed to stop one club luring away players from a rival during the course of a championship.

It said the stability of contracts was very important, but underlined that FIFA rules must respect the overriding EU principle that workers should have freedom of movement to carry out their profession wherever they choose.

The Commission also welcomed FIFA's proposals for new rules to compensate clubs for money spent training up-and-coming players and said talks were under way on the details.

Crucially, it said that contract severance fees unrelated to training costs would not be covered by EU competition law as long as they were in line with the employment legislation of individual countries.

But it added that if FIFA insisted on setting common rules to apply across the board, they must follow the strictures of EU law, something the Commission argues is not the case at the moment.

The Task Force's initial proposals, made on October 31, include a ban on the international transfer of minors, compensation for clubs which have trained young players, "respect for contracts", set periods during the year when transfers can take place, a system of arbitration and arrangements to smooth the transition to a new system.

And while European Union leaders have accepted that sport was special, they have reaffirmed their stance that it was not special enough to be exempt from EU law.

At the Riviera summit, leaders of the 15-nation bloc adopted a declaration recognising the "social, educational and cultural functions inherent in sport and making it special".

The paper had been agreed in principle by EU foreign ministers last Monday.

But, while the declaration pays lip-service to sports federations' demands for special treatment, it falls well short of the special exemption from EU law being demanded by FIFA in its wrangle with the European Commission over soccer transfers.

World soccer chiefs, keen to resolve a recent controversy over transfers, had urged the EU to back the plans, saying sport could not be seen only in an economic context because it had a wider educational function in helping social integration.

The Commission argues the existing set-up breaks EU laws on fair competition and the right of all workers to ply their trade freely in the Union.

"The (EU summit) is keenly supportive of dialogue on the transfer system...with due regard for the specific requirements of sport, subject to compliance with Community law," the four-page declaration said.

It also stresses the autonomy of sporting federations to organise their respective sports in whatever way they choose, so long as they obey EU and national law.

But it calls on federations to ensure that single ownership of more than one sports club in the same event does not jeopardise fair competition.

The document expresses concern at "commercial transactions" involving young sportsmen and calls for money generated from television contracts to be distributed evenly through all layers of professional and amateur sport to allow clubs to continue training promising youngsters.

It also urged federations to step up the fight against doping and racism in sport.

Meanwhile, FIFA has at the weekend again urged the EU to make sport a special case, claiming it cannot be viewed in economic terms and should not be subject to their usual rules and regulations.

"We are not suggesting that we should somehow live outside the laws which rule our society for football itself is a reflection of society," said FIFA president Sepp Blatter in a statement.

"But at the same time, sport cannot be allowed to be blindly subject to legal principles, rules or regulations which would endanger the fragile equilibrium that exists between the different sections of the football family."

Late last month European sports commissioner Viviane Reding accused FIFA of acting like a cartel by believing that they were above the laws of national governments.

However, Blatter claimed: "FIFA cannot under any circumstances be regarded as a cartel for its very raison d'etre is to preserve the global interests of a sport which has become truly universal and thus also to defend the interests of everyone concerned."

Ref in Gabbie storm

REFEREE Greg Leverton was the center of a storm at the Blacktown—St George match last Saturday.

A series of inconsistent rulings hit the Richter scale when Demons defender Damien Foxe (pictured) was given his marching orders towards the end of a tight match.

It was Foxe's first match back for Blacktown after returning from a loan spell at NSL club Sydney United.

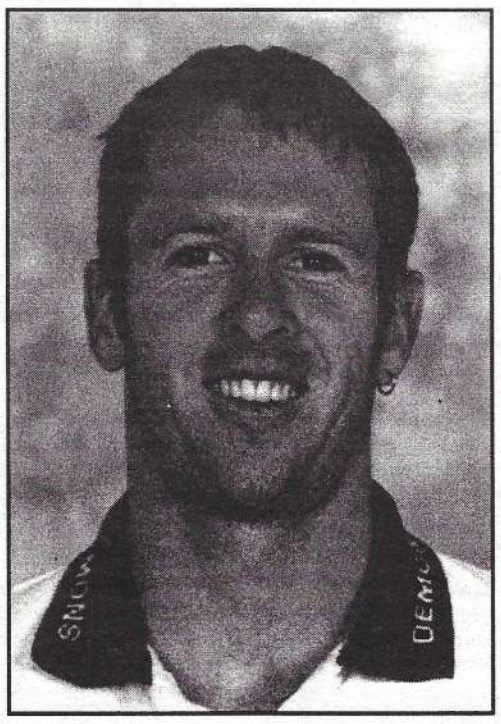
Foxe was red card for what appeared to be a professional foul, bringing down his opponent just yards into his own half.

Minutes earlier team-mate Steve Riches had been hauled down twice within the space of seconds by a St George defender in what looked every bit a red-card offence.

Adding to the dissension of the referee's performance was an incident which saw a St George player yellow carded after apparently striking an opponent.

"He was atrocious," said one club official after the match. "It wasn't that he was bad, he was just so inconsistent."

Current rules effectively gag a referee from making comment after the match and also serve to silence team officials and players.



However hundreds of spectators field out of the ground bemused at the decisions—as did a surprisingly large press contingent.

Bruce Campbell

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exists in Duntroon Publishing's
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Do you have an interest in developing your writing or photography skills, are you an experienced writer looking for a new outlet, do you have a passion for the round ball game, would you like to join *SuperSoccer's* team?

SuperSoccer is currently expanding its team and has several vacancies. Previous applicant may re-apply.

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This could be that opportunity that you have been looking for to break into the tough and competitive world of sports writing.
You should be reliable, well spoken, have a good grasp of English grammar and sentence construction and be prepared to write to a deadline. You must also be 18 years or older and have a good background knowledge of football.
These are non-paid positions and several vacancies exist.
Note that they could well lead to paid, part time or full time positions.

Positions 3-7 require work to be submitted via email and to a strict deadline. Applications, in writing, should be made by Friday 15th December.

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STARS WALKING OUT ... TAKE-OVER BID BY FAILED NSL BOSS ... CANCELLED GAMES ... it has been a turbulent week for Carlton. By pulling out of their fixture against Adelaide City last week they have risked being tossed out of the league, and as *SuperSoccer* went to print the growing glamour within the game was for the NSL to dump the Melbourne club. Here are some of the stories which have bubbled along in a fiery 7 day period.

VICTORIAN BLUES

ADELAIDE, Thursday:
Millionaire South Australian businessman Con Makris wants to take over financially crippled national soccer league club Carlton and move it to Adelaide.

Makris, a developer who owns 12 shopping centres in Adelaide, intended to apply for a licence for a new club next season but will now try to take control of Melbourne-based Carlton with big plans for its future.

"It's a good opportunity to move now instead of waiting until next year," Makris who flopped as boss of West Adelaide said.

"I would carry on paying the players and I would bring them to Adelaide to play their games at Hindmarsh Stadium," Makris said.

"The first thing I would do is to pay the players and I would guarantee that they would be paid for the rest of the year."

However, he said that underachievers could expect a pay cut if he did take control of the club.

Makris wants to run the best soccer club in Australia.

He has already approached eight of the Socceroos who played in last month's international against Scotland and is confident they will join his club, the South Coast Eagles, next season.

"I have an in-principle agreement with eight of the Socceroos including Kevin Muscat, Shaun Murphy and Stan Lazaridis," Makris said.

Add Glasgow Rangers defender Tony Vidmar to that list as he is Adelaide-born and Makris did not deny he was laso on his list.

"I want to give this town a good solid club," he said.

Makris believed a club like Carlton, which is not aligned to an ethnic base, could draw crowds of up to 10,000 in Adelaide although it struggles to draw 3000 in Melbourne.

Makris said he was prepared to offer Jess 30 per cent of any transfer money, 30 per cent of championship winnings and 30 per cent of earnings if the club made the world club championship.

"If the club closes tomorrow he will get nothing."

Meanwhile another touted investor Jack Reilly has played down any move to extend a lifeline to the club.

"I think Soccer Australia should be investigating the situation and lend its support to the sport that it is administrating, whatever can be done should be done," the former Socceroo goalkeeper said.

MELBOURNE, Wednesday
Victorian sports minister Justin Madden has ruled out any government moves to extend a lifeline to financially crippled soccer club Carlton.

Madden, a former Carlton chairman, said through a spokesperson that there was nothing the government could do to help.

"The government is not in the business of bailing out private sporting clubs," she said.

MELBOURNE, Thursday
Carlton's national soccer league match against Adelaide City has been called off after a bid to take over the cash-strapped club stalled again today.

The potential buyer is confident a deal can be reached on Monday but as every hour passes the future of the club looks more doubtful.

A consortium headed by LaIonica Chickens owner Sam Cuteri put a bid on the table today but owner Peter Jess rejected the offer.

Cuteri also revealed that at least one of his backers had pulled out of the consortium after star players Archie Thompson and Simon Colosimo said they were leaving.

The players claim they are free agents as the club failed to pay their wages.

Cuteri said one of the major stumbling blocks was an insistence that he pay off the club's debts including players' wages.

"I just do not want to pay the back wages," he said.

But he believed he was still close to taking over the club and new investors would join his consortium.

"We've got an extension until Monday and for me the bid is still alive," Cuteri said.

The players had lengthy talks with their union and agreed to take pay cuts of between five and 15 per cent in a bid to allow the club to survive under the new syndicate.

Players' union chief executive Brendan Schwab said a proposal will be presented to the club, the new syndicate and Soccer Australia.

"The proposal sets out the minimum requirements by which we believe we'll be able to deliver the team in an intact and competitive shape for the rest of the season," Schwab said.

"The proposal includes the possibility of new player contracts, the writing off of a substantial superannuation debt and the potential, if necessary, for the players to take a pay cut of up to 15 per cent."

National Soccer League general manager Stefan Kamasz said postponing the game gave all parties the chance to consider their actions.

He said the players had raised concerns about the possible non-payment of wages and were worried what would happen if any players were injured during the match.

"Whilst it would have been preferable for the game to go ahead I am very emphatic to the predicament the players are in."

Soccer Australia will also consider any compensation claim from Adelaide.

ACE midfielder Simon Colosimo and striker Archie Thompson have walked out on financially-stricken NSL club Carlton, significantly eroding the price it will fetch in the sale currently being negotiated.

The highly-valued pair, both of whom had received attention from European clubs, served termination notices on Carlton last week as owners, potential buyers and players all scrambled to protect their interests.

Carlton director Peter Jess denied the loss of the pair would prevent the sale of the club, and criticised them for desertion during the crisis.

"I would have thought there would have been a total show of solidarity because all the other guys are willing to stick by us," Jess said.

"We've talked to the guys who are potentially going to buy the club and they're not really fazed."

The sale of Thompson, the NSL's top scorer, and Socceroo Colosimo were the club's only potential salvation and without that hope, the club's financial predicament was even grimmer.

Potential buyers were now assessing a team with little popular support, few players that could fetch a decent transfer fee, fading hopes of being included in the 12-team NSL competition beginning next year and the resultant difficulty of attracting sponsors.

"As we've said throughout it's been a very difficult situation for the players and they (Thompson and Colosimo) are entitled to exercise their rights," the Players Union said in a statement.

"Whether it's a deal breaker or not, that's a matter for the people who are interested in investing in the club.

"We'd like to think it shouldn't be because if a football club is run properly there are a number of revenue streams available."

Thompson said he'd waited weeks for wages, had four other NSL clubs chasing him and could no longer tolerate Carlton's uncertain future.

Cuteri plan wants guarantees

By Michael Lynch

Melbourne businessman Sam Cuteri and his northern-suburbs consortium and his partners are prepared to take over the financially crippled club if star players Simon Colosimo and Archie Thompson go back on their decisions to quit the club and agree to play on through the rest of the season.

The group - which says raising the $1million-plus required to keep the operation afloat for the rest of the season is not a problem - also wants approval for the team to play its remaining 11 home games at Epping Stadium, where it has attracted larger than normal gates for its past two matches.

But, crucially, Cuteri said that he and his partners also wanted some indications that Soccer Australia would look kindly on the club's candidature for a place in next year's restructured NSL.

For the offer to get up it has to satisfy not just the beleaguered Carlton owner Peter Jess, but also Soccer Australia and the players.

Central to their concerns will be whether their wages - which have not been paid for several weeks - are maintained at, or close to, their current levels.

Soccer Australia is unlikely to have any problems in agreeing to the request to use Epping as a home venue, but will find it very difficult to make an accommodation on the issue of Carlton's position in a revamped league.

The NSL has been consistent on its line all through this crisis that to make any exceptions for this cash-strapped club would contaminate its reform process and destroy its efforts for a meaningful restructure.

Bruce Campbell

TALKING FOOTBALL

THE ROLE of the football specialist press is a curious one, made even more so for me after a recent discussion with a long-time fan.

Historically, the specialist football weekly has proven a hard core read for dedicated fans, giving a comprehensive wrap-up of the preceding week with a taste of what's to come also.

That is what *SuperSoccer* does, and that is what every other similar publication does also.

In Europe football weeklies are hard hitting and authorative, except for Britain where, curiously, they do not exist.

The Australian football weekly has grown up by a lack of reasonable coverage in our daily press.

Sixty years ago football scarcely rated a mention, fifty years ago it was treated as an oddity played by those strange 'refos' from Europe and even in the last twenty five years, the life span of the NSL, it has been regarded by most as a second class citizen.

Two exceptions are the *West Australian* and the *Illawarra Mercury*, both publications which gave a great deal of space to the game.

But the Sydney press has long been something of a joke.

The Australian seems to have some kind of identity crisis and gives at best a token coverage.

That isn't to say that their head football writer, Ray Gatt, is a bad fellow or a poor writer.

In fact, far from it.

Gatty is a top bloke.

But his paper, from a football perspective at least, is a bit of an oddity.

The Telegraph is another strange one.

Mondays it covers the odd NSL match report and plenty of British, Tuesdays-Thursdays it is like looking for a needle in a haystack, Fridays is preview day and then Saturday can be anything.

My own favourite is the *Sydney Morning Herald.*

Mike Cockerill is a very good writer and gets far more space than the others so he can flex his muscles a wee bit.

But really, they are all second rate.

In any given week the total content of Australian football in all three wouldn't come anywhere near the coverage as given by *SuperSoccer.*

But then that is the role of the specialist football press.

Along the way we get our share of scoops and news stories but by and large that role is to provide a comprehensive coverage.

Aided by an energetic and dynamic new marketing manager at *SuperSoccer*, Keiren Blake, the message is now starting to filter down to club land.

Some of them have forgotten all about the football specialist press, some have pigeon holed it into a minor 'role', dwarfed by the metro dailies.

But the truth is far from that scenario.

The truth is that the hard core football fan gets the bulk of his information from magazines like *SuperSoccer.*

There has been a recent trend for clubs to look for the new fan, the 'soft' fan if you prefer that term.

The soft fan includes the smart city type in his suit by day and casuals by night along with his designer dressed wife and 2.4 children.

That for many clubs has been the target market in recent years.

Interestingly however, both the Manchester United captain and manager have slammed these 'prawn sandwich' supporters.

It seems that at Old Trafford they want the hard core fan.

These are the die-hards, there week in and week out and regardless of results.

They aren't the ones who will desert the club when it isn't top of the league nor are they the ones who are over demanding of success.

Instead they want to watch their team try their very best each week—and they want to read *SuperSoccer.*

For any club to be ultimately successful they need a mixture of hard and soft fans but they also need to be mindful of who will fill their seats when the club isn't hitting the high straps.

For at the end of the day there can only be a few clubs in any division who are successful, the rest are trying to build for future success.

Does all that make the role of *SuperSoccer* one of a minor press?

I don't think so.

I know of lots of hard core fans who don't buy the metro dailies because they do not have enough football, and I am one of those.

It would seem that you can't have your prawn sandwich and eat it.

WHY not drop SuperSoccer a line? You don't have to agree, just make your point on any matter relating to football.

NOT ANOTHER RIP-OFF

IT seems that Manchester United are eyeing up another Asian tour that might just see the English mega club 'treat' us dumb colonials to a few exhibition matches. Little wonder, their last tour reaped them a small fortune.

But it was done on the backs of the long-suffering Australian football fan.

For too many years we have had to witness teams touring our shores with a holiday attitude.

The last trip by Manchester United was no different.

They treated the game here with disdain, put on a half show, and left important key personnel behind.

But they did what they had to do and took the money home with them.

The Red Devils knew that their name alone would bring in the required squillions, after that why would they bother whether or not the fans were being cheated?

I have no doubt that the tour promoters did everything with the very best of intentions but we have seen it all before.

Will it happen again?

What do you think .....

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Marconi Stallions running last in NSL race

ONCE the millionaires of the NSL, Sydney club Marconi have sure shown a reverse in their fortunes lately.

On the heels of their decision to loan out rising star Chad Gibson for a paltry $145,000 (probably a night on a couple of pokies for the wealthy club) comes their denial that they are linked with Carlton's walkaway star Archie Thompson. It wasn't that long ago that players would queue up to play at Marconi, one of the league's founding clubs and certainly one of the all-time glamour teams.

But with a string of honours behind them it seems that those days are in the past. These days the talk at Marconi isn't about who is coming but who is going.

Marconi moved quickly last week to distance themselves from the Thompson stories. Clubs all over the world play up speculative stories about which players might be coming, keeping their name in the media headlines and increasing their stocks in the fan market so Marconi's stance is just a bit confusing. And they are now one of the few major NSL clubs who have not embraced full time professionalism. It would seem that the Italians Stallions are more like a tired pony than a racehorse.

I'm sure that the guys at Bossley Park will be a bit unhappy that their commitment to top flight football is being questioned. Especially considering that over the years they have been one of the trend setters. But the truth is that those days are long gone. Today's Stallions couldn't win a bush race, never mind the NSL.

And if they keep on sending their youngsters overseas for a bucket full of jelly beans then their own fans will start turning their backs on them. Archie Thompson at Bossley Park would have been an inspired signing. The Bush Bullet might have even helped to drag more fans through the gates. But Marconi are now the forgotten team of Sydney when it comes to headlines—unless you want to read the puff stories put out in the 'other' soccer weekly.

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Sapphires firing for WNSL Grand Final

BY Marc Barnett

THE NSW Sapphires are on their way to QLD to challenge for the 'Holy Grail' of Women's Soccer in Australia.

The Sapphires were comprehensive 5-1 winners over Northern NSW Pride and this Saturday at Suncorp Stadium, they will have the chance to retain the National title they secured last season.

The Sapphires once again found it hard going at the start of the match, with Northern NSW using their usual physical tactics.

But the tactics nearly backed fired, when in the 11th minute a Tann-Darby free kick went just wide of the target.

The Sapphires went closer in the 23rd minute, when Taryn Rockall found Kelly Golebiowski inside the box, Golebiowski's left foot strike gave the crossbar a wake up call, but left the score at 0-0.

The crowd did not have to wait much longer for the opening goal, in the 27th minute Thea Slatyer had a high shot from wide on the left side of the penalty area.

Northern NSW keeper Jenny Praszczalek managed to get a hand to the ball, but Justine McLaughlin was on the spot to clean up the crumbs and put the Sapphires ahead 1-0.

Kelly Golebiowski went close to finding the target again, when she chipped the keeper, only to find the ball travel over the top of the goals.

Northern NSW then had a chance to equalise when an error from Anissa Tann-Darby saw a shot rocketing at goal, leaving the acrobatics of Cassandra Kell to prevent NSW from losing its lead.

A few minutes later Kell then put herself back under more pressure with a bad clearance, leaving Katie Gill to squander a chance at an open goal.

NSW put the five minutes of madness behind them and went back on the attack.

NSW played the ball wide to Thea Slatyer, Slatyer chested the ball to her feet, had one touch, and from outside the box Slatyer bent her shot over the goalkeeper head for a remarkable goal.

NSW Sapphires had their heads held high at the break with a commanding 2-0 lead.

The start of the second half saw Northern NSW coach Mark Jones virtually seal the match for NSW by making a very strange substitution.

Jones replaced experienced goalkeeper Jenny Praszczalek with 13-year-old Alison Logue who was playing in her first WNSL game.

In the 58th minute Logue got her first taste of what it is like to play in the big time.

Kristine Collins played the ball to Neisha Klessatel, got it back and played it to Taryn Rockall and Collins then made a run down the right hand side.

Rockall played the ball wide to Collins who put in a cross right on the goalkeeper.

Logue spilt the ball and Golebiowski tapped in for a 3-0 lead.

Sapphires coach Allan Bourke then decided to introduce Lisa Gilbert into the game, with immediate results.

Gilbert, who was celebrating her 22nd birthday, was on park only three minutes when she chipped a ball perfectly into the path of Golebiowski who made no mistake with the finish for her second goal of the day.

In the 86th minute, the new star of the show, Lisa Gilbert, received the ball inside the box, turned and fired the ball past the young goalkeeper to give the Sapphires a 5-0 lead.

Northern NSW did gain a consolation goal through Rose Dunne who was unmarked and beat substitute goalkeeper Justine King.

Lisa Gilbert very nearly picked up a double, when in the dying moments of the match she broke free into the box and cracked a shot into the post, however the score finished up the same as it did in round 3, 5-1.

NSW 5 (McLaughlin 27', Slatyer 43', Golebiowski 58' 75', Gilbert 87')
Northern NSW 1 (Dunne 89')
St George Stadium, St George. 9 December
Referee: Amelia Morris
NSW: Kell (King 84'), Kristine Collins, Warrener, Klessattel, Rockall, Tann-Darby, L. Collins, Golebiowski, McLaughlin (Gilbert 72') Carney, Slatyer (Davison 84').
Northern NSW Pride: Praszczalek (Logue 45'), Stevens, Alley (Aimie Neilson 78'), Ingles, Wilson, Dunne, McMinn, Crawford, Gill, King (Colthorpe 72'), Attwill. Subs Not Used: Scevak.
Cautions: Wilson 51'

NSW Sapphires coach Allan Bourke was pleased with the way his team kept the ball moving, the game pan was to have the Northern NSW team chasing them, and Bourke felt they did this well especially in the second half.

Bourke praised his captain Anissa Tann-Darby for her organisation at the back, along with Thea Slatyer and Lisa Gilbert who both had strong impacts on the game.

The Sapphires did go into the match with only 14 players, and will be strengthened by the return of the Australian Schoolgirls team which currently has four of the Sapphires squad with them.

Looking ahead to Saturday's final, QLD have the best defence in the league, winning all five games and only conceding one goal.

The goal was conceded against the best attacking team in the league, the NSW Sapphires.

The Sapphires have scored 20 goals in the six games they have played, including 10 goals in their last two games.

The Grand Final will be played at Suncorp Stadium, after the National League match between Brisbane and Carlton with kick-off scheduled for 8pm.

NSW Sapphires coach Allan Bourke is quietly confident that his side has what it takes to bring QLD unbeaten run to an end.

QAS Sting coach Mike Mulvey has confirmed that all his players will be back on deck for the final after two players were missing through injury in round 5.

With the final Matildas side being named on Monday this game may be the last chance to impress interim National Coach Adrian Santrac.

The Julie Dolan medal presentation will also be held in QLD.

It will be held as a lunch on Sunday the 17th of December.

Aussie tourists hitting the net

By Marc Barnett

THE touring Australian Schoolgirls are currently undefeated, after three straight wins over the Tahiti Under 20 national team.

The first match saw the Aussies down 1-0 with 20 minutes to go, when a hat trick to Catherine Cannuli set the Australians on their winning way.

The team has not looked back from there, with a 6-0 win, in which Cannuli scored 4 goals.

The third match saw the Australian team victorious 5-0, with Captain Kathryn Collins scoring 2 goals.

The team are currently in New Zealand playing the New Zealand Schoolgirls in two matches, followed by a match against a New Zealand development squad.

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Justin Bucarelli (Under 21s Head Coach)
9715 7454 0419 581 581

BLACKTOWN CITY young star Adam Kwasnik who has already attracted the attention of both West Ham United and Parramatta Power. Kwasnik is a striker with an uncanny sense of getting into scoring positions. Recently the Blacktown Youth player impressed the coaching staff at West Ham after going to England as part of the Toongabbie club's sponsorship deal.

Reconstruction blues haunt heartland

By Bruce Campbell

IF ANY area in Sydney can lay claim to being one of strength then it is Fairfield.

The outer western suburb, although as the sprawling metropolis grows ever westward that tag loses its relevance, is the heartland for the current youthful demographic in the round ball game.

With two NSL clubs, the classy Bonnyrigg White Eagles Premier League side, a host of Federation clubs and the thriving Southern Districts SFA the city of Fairfield has it all.

Some have argued over the years that Sydney United and Marconi are too close to each other for survival.,

Yet they have done just that, and then some.

A string of major honours shared between the two stone's-throw rivals indicates that close enough is certainly good enough.

Claims otherwise always seem to emanate form those who know nothing of Sydney's size nor the cultural background of these two post war migrant-based clubs.

But the planned reconstruction of the NSL has a lot of people counting Sydney United as already out of the league.

That is a point which won't find much favour at Edensor Road.

The club has one of the best playing surfaces in Australia, a magnificent grandstand, seating facilities for up to 10,000 and corporate facilities which are quite superb.

It is the best-appointed private ground in the league at a time when other clubs are being racked by narrow profit margins due to high ground rents and loss of match day turnover.

United have benefited from the policy of owning their own and in less than ten years have turned their stadium from an open bowl into a showpiece for Australian football in the new millennium.

But it is the massive talent belt that gives the club's supporters so much satisfaction.

Senior football really kicked off at a higher level in 1970 when Marconi were promoted to the NSW First Division.

They had been formed in 1958 but spent most of their existence up to 1970 in amateur and semi amateur leagues.

Sydney United, which have gone through a variety of name changes including Metro, South Sydney Croatia, Sydney Croatia, Sydney CSC were formed in the same era, if not the same area, also formed in 1958.

However their base was the inner suburbs until the 1970s when the club relocated to its present site at King Tomislav Park, known more commonly in the football press as Edensor Park.

Sydney United were promoted to the NSWSF First Division in 1963.

These two clubs have proven to be the NSL base of the outer west and have seen many fine players come through their combined ranks in that time.

Undoubtedly the best of them all is Manchester United 'keeper Mark Bosnich.

THE MOST FAMOUS PLAYER PRODUCED IN FAIRFIELD: MANCHESTER UNITED'S MARK BOSNICH

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Even given Bosnich's out-of-favour status at present there is little doubting his class.

Bozza is pure Fairfield, having developed through Hadjuk rangers, Sydney Croatia and Marconi before buying out his contract in 1992 to return to English football.

The future, who knows, but only a fool would ignore the history of magnificent success in Sydney's heartland.

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www.soccer.nsw.com.au

Bove's twin ambitions

By Bryan Cokely

THE twin ambitions of Raphael Bove have been delayed after the recent injury sustained almost inevitably as fate would demand, against his first senior team Sydney Olympic.

The severing of an anterior cruciate ligament in the knee has put Bove out for at least four to five months.

The injury was a clean snap which was repaired with a graft from one of his hamstring muscles.

A messier tear would have meant a longer recovery period.

However, it is cold comfort as Bove sits it out in the first few weeks post injury aquainting himself with the staff at the video store and mastering Play Station.

Injuries are never exciting partners, as Bove has discovered previously.

It was a combination of a hamstring injury, cold weather and homesickness that ended his two year stay at the brand new surrounds at S.C. Heerenveen in Holland's wet and dreary north.

Hereenveen, a small city of 50,000 people, was first stop on a three club tour of Europe.

While there, Bove shared large parts of his time with potential superstar and now close friend Ruud Van Nistlerooy, himself no stranger to knee injuries.

A shared hotel and time to kill away from home is a common feature of the migrant football player.

Next stop was Dundee United.

O.K. so Holland was damp and dreary but Heerenveen was flush with a new ground and facilities supplied Blackburn style by a rich benefactor.

Dundee on the other hand is, well, well, let's be positive here.

Dundee has two football clubs and a big bridge.

In short Raphael Bove did not enjoy his stay on the East coast of Scotland.

They were the ultimate soccer odd couple.

Bove enjoys the tactical patient build up employed by the Italians.

Dundee demanded that he win the knockdowns and crumbs after burly defenders had lashed the ball upfield in an attempt to place the ball in intensive care.

Win it, give it and win it again after the person you gave it to just lost it!

Aaaaaarrrrrggghhh, rattled around Bove's head.

It couldn't have been worse.

But it was.

Bove was deeply disappointed with other aspects of Scottish Football.

"Without being disrespectful it is very unprofessional in Scotland," he says.

"At Dundee United the training itself was a shambles, a bit of passing crossing and shooting and maybe a game of young ones versus the older players.

"I thought, here we are playing Celtic or Rangers on Saturday and we are training like this and back at the club we would be served fried fish and baked beans or bacon and eggs, compare this to Holland where we were fed lots of carbohydrates."

And to cap it all an unscrupulous, manipulative agent tried selling him behind his back.

"He took me for a mug," adds Bove.

"I came back from an Olyroo camp and the gaffer at Dundee was surprised to see me."

The agent had sneakily told Dundee that Raphael was not coming back.

"Marconi is a good set up to be honest," said Bove on reflection.

Respite from Dundee was found in Serie C of the Italian League at A.S. Livorno.

No culture shock in the land of his birth, familiar football ideals and pasta.

At contract's end Bove decided that the best place to launch another assault on the higher leagues in Europe would be back home in Sydney.

Marconi provided the opportunity and while the club's early season form was patchy, Bove was enjoying himself whether it be at sweeper or in front of the back three, and above all the side were encouraged to pass.

His plan was to have a season or two at Marconi and then a wiser more mature Raphael Bove would return for another go in Italy, possibly Serie B or in the French league.

At 23, Bove has time to recover, and often you have to experience the lows to appreciate that which is available to you. Marconi have lost a class player this season but Bove may find that his personal loss may just be the catalyst to fulfill his personal goals.

However bitter experience has taught Bove that there is no substitute for hard work and respect for others.

He agrees with John Kosmina when it comes to youngsters currently itching to get overseas

"Kossie said some of the players now are holding back, not willing to put the hard work in thinking they'll do that in two years time when they are overseas", said Bove.

Big Mistake, Big Mistake!

Down Memory Lane

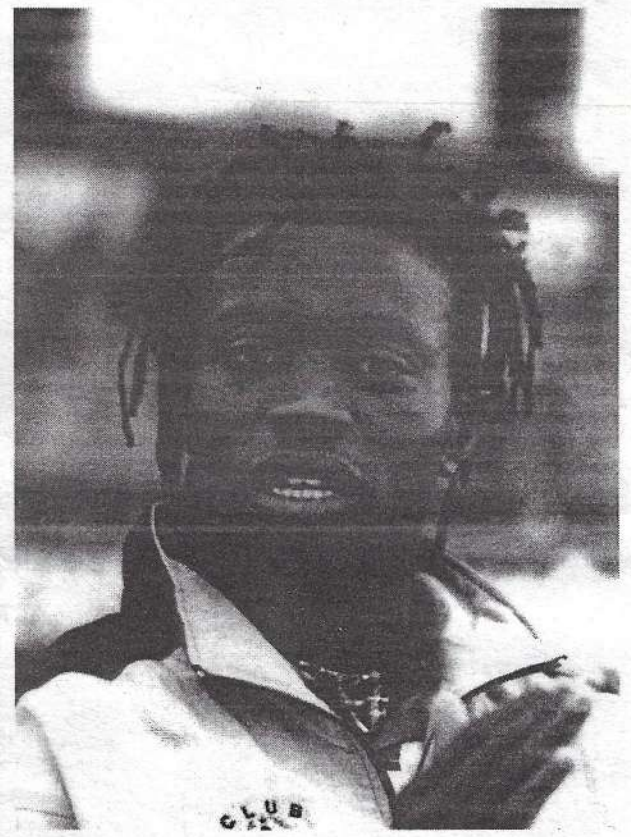
MARCONI are one of only three clubs still members of the NSL since 1977. South Melbourne and Adelaide City are the other founder members.

A stroll down memory lane looks at Marconi's first ever NSL match played at Perry Park, Brisbane against Brisbane City.

The game itself was a 1-0 win for Marconi with Bossley Park legend Peter Sharne (the Rocket) getting the lone goal.

Brisbane City: Osvaldo Borzi, Ian Rathmell, Thomas McLeod, Peter Tokesi, Frank Pimblett, Larry Herdle, Jim Hermiston, Larry Gaffney, Kevin Caldwell, John Coyne, Ian Johnston. Substitutes: Brian Kibbey, Willie Conner.

1 Marconi Fairfield: Alan Maher, Barry Jones, Paul Degney, Ivo Prskalo, Raul Carrizo, Stuart Selvage, Jimmy Rooney, Ray Richards, Gary Byrne, Stuart Robertson, Peter Sharne. Substitutes: Berti Mariani, Ernie Campbell.



FAIRFIELD through and through: Francis Awaritefe, the English import has played a starring role at both Marconi and Sydney United since his move north from South Melbourne.

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Fairfield's Kings of Sydney

SuperSoccer focus on FOOTBALL IN FAIRFIELD

Sydney's Big Three

HOW THEY RATED: 1996-1999

1 Sydney United	1 4 1 (6)
2 Marconi Stallions	5 5 4 (14)
3 Sydney Olympic	9 9 7 (25)

Numerals indicate the league position of each club, the total is the collective of all those three seasons, clearly showing that in that three year spell Sydney United were the Kings of Sydney football.

By Bruce Campbell

TWO Premierships, two Grand Final appearances and a fourth placing gave Sydney United the title of the Kings of Sydney as the old millennium ended.

History shows that the 1999/2000 season was one to forget but the bland pages of record books do not begin to tell the story of how a great team was almost wiped from the face of football's map.

Sydney United as a club had withstood a barrage of problems, dancing to every note and stanza of the tune that former ASF chairman David Hill played.

But as it became increasingly clear that football's Pied Piper was more intent on leading them on a road of destruction, United somehow managed to survive.

Under Branko Culina and then Dave Mitchell United played the silkiest brand of football seen in the NSL for some time and ignited the terraces with an almost non-stop conveyor belt of success.

Then disaster struck, a culmination of years of administrative and financial problems finally surfacing.

They shouldn't have even made it to the start of the 1999/2000 season with their entire playing roster wiped out after off-field problems threatened to do what the football politicians had failed.

Sydney United's strength had always been on the park, yet now it was in tatters.

It seemed that the west Sydney club was on its way out of senior football.

Having once forced David Hill's lawyers to eat more than a piece of humble pie, it looked all but over.

But somehow they backed up from that disastrous spell to lure rookie coach Alan Hunter to the fold.

In turn Hunter brought in stars like Francis Awaritefe and Zlatko Arambasic and a new name who may yet prove to be the equal of them all, Cummins Menapi.

A bright opening to the new season somehow conspired to go off the rails, but the signs are that Hunter's shock troops have got their act together again.

Can United resume their throne position?

Can they once again strut the boardwalk as the Kings of Sydney Football?

Who knows, and certainly there is a new challenge from Sydney Olympic while Parramatta Power and Northern Spirit also promise much.

But there is another challenge to face off-field, with the threat of league restructure looming larger than the threat of David Hill ever did.

It would be ironic if the new breed at United reclaimed their crown only to be shown the door.

1996/97	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1 Sydney United	26	17	5	4	67	33	56
2 Brisbane Strikers	26	15	2	9	55	40	47
3 South Melbourne	26	14	4	8	39	25	46
4 Adelaide City	26	11	10	5	32	22	43
5 Marconi-Fairfield	26	12	4	10	41	37	40
6 Melbourne Knights	26	11	6	9	36	32	39
7 Perth Glory	26	11	5	10	48	41	38
8 West Adelaide	26	10	3	13	39	51	33
9 UTS Olympic	26	8	8	10	41	46	32
10 Wollongong City Wolves	26	8	8	10	42	48	32
11 Newcastle Breakers	26	7	9	10	40	46	30
12 Gippsland Falcons	26	8	6	12	33	41	30
13 Collingwood Warriors	26	6	9	11	32	44	27
14 Canberra Cosmos	26	2	5	19	30	69	11

1997-98	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1 South Melbourne	26	13	9	4	56	41	48
2 Carlton	26	12	9	5	44	24	45
3 Adelaide City	26	13	4	9	45	30	43
4 Sydney United	26	11	10	5	37	26	43
5 Marconi-Fairfield	26	12	7	7	33	25	43
6 Wollongong City Wolves	26	13	3	10	51	33	42
7 Melbourne Knights	26	11	6	9	37	35	39
8 Perth Glory	26	10	6	10	35	40	36
9 UTS Olympic	26	10	5	11	37	43	35
10 West Adelaide	26	10	4	12	32	38	34
11 Gippsland Falcons	26	8	7	11	28	36	31
12 Brisbane Strikers	26	6	5	15	23	40	23
13 Newcastle Breakers	26	4	9	13	30	50	21
14 Canberra Cosmos	26	3	8	15	29	56	17

1998/99	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1 Sydney United	28	18	4	6	53	33	58
2 South Melbourne	28	17	6	5	50	26	57
3 Perth Glory	28	16	5	7	62	37	53
4 Marconi-Fairfield	28	15	3	10	53	47	48
5 Northern Spirit	28	14	4	10	36	35	46
6 Adelaide City	28	13	6	9	39	26	45
7 Sydney Olympic	28	12	7	9	46	36	43
8 Newcastle Breakers	28	11	7	10	29	33	40
9 Brisbane Strikers	28	11	6	11	41	47	39
10 Wollongong City Wolves	28	8	8	12	45	52	32
11 Carlton	28	9	4	15	47	47	31
12 Melbourne Knights	28	8	5	15	32	43	29
13 Adelaide Sharks	28	7	6	15	36	46	27
14 Gippsland Falcons	28	5	10	13	17	44	25
15 Canberra Cosmos	28	4	3	21	21	55	15

1999/2000	P	W	D	L	F	A	P.
1 Perth Glory	34	19	7	8	60	42	64
2 Wollongong City Wolves	34	17	9	8	72	44	60
3 Carlton	34	17	7	10	55	39	58
4 Adelaide City	34	16	8	10	57	37	56
5 Sydney Olympic	34	16	7	11	56	40	55
6 Marconi Stallions	34	16	7	11	53	49	55
7 Newcastle Breakers	34	14	9	11	44	44	51
8 Football Kingz	34	15	5	14	57	59	50
9 Brisbane Strikers	34	13	10	11	46	40	49
10 South Melbourne	34	14	7	13	55	51	49
11 Parramatta Power	34	14	5	15	52	47	47
12 Melbourne Knights	34	13	6	15	44	57	45
13 Northern Spirit	34	11	3	20	41	58	36
14 Canberra Cosmos	34	9	9	16	44	64	36
15 Gippsland Falcons	34	7	8	19	23	49	29
16 Sydney United	34	5	5	24	19	58	20

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Veteran Kupresak brings back steel

By Bryan Cokely

THE cheer that greeted Velemir Kupresak when he arrived as a second half substitute against Parramatta recently had two messages.

Welcome back from injury Vel, was the polite opener, and the second with a huge sigh of relief was 'thank the lord, someone to shore up the defence.'

Up until that point Sydney United had conceded 11 goals away from home in just under three games.

The remainder of the match saw no further leakages in the hitherto sieve-like United defence.

Many would argue that the reason Parramatta failed to ignite last season was despite fleecing the Bravehearts of two thirds of its minor premiership squad it did not convince the rock solid Kupresak to follow suit.

Unlike sweeper Richard Plesa, Kupresak is a rock solid defender first and ball player second.

When an attacking style is employed you need an insurance policy at the back.

At Carlton, Alan Hunter bravely, some say foolishly picked three forwards away from home.

Midfield stalwart Aytec Genc agreed that it is a bold philosophy that sees you win 5-4 or lose 4-0.

There is no doubt that United are playing attractive football but all over the park they have lacked a bit of steel.

Genc explained that he had been cast in the role of ball winner in the absence of Vince Savocca, and the loss of Ante Moric to Sydney Olympic.

"I usually play wide or mid left but I have been asked to anchor the midfield," he said.

Despite being somewhat outfought in the first half Genc marshaled his young midfield and showed the grit that is needed to prise United out of an away slump.

Genc said that without Kupresak and Savocca, Hunter has coaxed his players into holding the ball as a team.

"It's no good having a ball winner for the sake of it when often they end up giving it away," Genc sagely said.

True enough but there is no doubt that ball winning will be the main concern for Alan Hunter's team in the coming weeks.

And that is why United's away support cheered as they did for Kupresak.

Other bright lights for United were the reappearance of the exciting Tommy Pondeljak following a Honeymoon sojourn and a loss of focus, while it appears that Commins Menape will positively fulfill the super sub role given to him by coach Hunter.

Genc expects United to hit their straps by half way through the season and feels that training intensity has stepped up a notch as a result of increased competition as the injured become fit again.

SuperSoccer FOCUS ON FOOTBALL IN FAIRFIELD

NSW STATE REFEREES COACH (part-time position)

Applications are invited for the part-time term position of NSW State Referees Coach.

The appointment will be for two years from 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2002.

The responsibilities of the position including establishing and maintaining a register of referee coaches and overseeing the training and development of referees in New South Wales, in line with National Coaching programs, under direction from the NSW Soccer Referees Commission.
Extensive travel throughout New South Wales is required, as well as weekend work.
The position is also a member of the National Referees Coaching Panel.

The successful applicant will have high-level experience as a referee and have first-class communication and administrative skills.

Applicants should, as a minimum, hold a Class 1 Referees' Certificate and have successfully completed the Level 1 Inspectors course, and be willing to undertake a Level 2 Inspectors course.
Experience in developing and providing education programs would be an advantage.

Applications should be forwarded by 14 December 2000 to:

The Secretary
NSW Referees Commission
PO Box 6146
BAULKHAM HILLS BC NSW 2153

Further information can be obtained from Ron Beaumont on telephone 02 9629 1800.

www.soccer.nsw.com.au

White Eagles amongst the pacesetters

Bonnyrigg White Eagles were founded in 1968 as Riverside Avala.

They changed their name to Avala in 1977 and then again in 1992 to Bonnyrigg White Eagles, representing changes in the attitudes of Australian football tom embracing district titles.

Since their 1977 they have been a continuous member of the elite level o State League football except for a two year spell in 1987 and 1988.

Avala had won the last Division 2 championship before restructure of Australian football saw the introduction of a national league.

In their first season in Division 1 Avala were fifth in the league but also won the prestigious Ampol Cup.

In 1992 the club also won the state wide Waratah Cup.

Currently the White Eagles are coached by former Socceroo Dragan 'Doug' Utjesenovic.

Their home ground is at the well-appointed Serbian Centre, Simpson Rd, Bonnyrigg.

Currently Bonnyrigg White Eagles are one of the pacesetters in the inaugural NSW Premier League.

Alex Tobin: Mr. Record

FORMER Socceroo defender Alex Tobin may have been lost to Australia if he did not play at the back of the field.

The Parramatta Power captain - who is set to break the all-time national soccer league appearances record on Saturday - was in his prime during the early `90s when it was rare for Australians to make it big in Europe.

Continental clubs were also limited to three foreign players.

"What tended to happen was that strikers and attacking midfielders were picked up rather than defenders or goalkeepers," said Tobin.

"If you tally all the guys who went over in that time, it would've been your (Aurelio) Vidmars, (Robbie) Slaters, (Graham) Arnolds and (Craig) Fosters - all your guys who were goal-scorers and so on."

ALEX TOBIN equalled the all-time NSL appearance record on Sunday, when Parramatta Power took on Sydney Olympic at Belmore Sports Ground.

The all-time NSL record is 445 games, set by Tobin's former Adelaide City team-mate Sergio Melta between 1977 and 1995.

Tobin played 436 games for Adelaide City between 1984 and 2000 before joining Parramatta for the 2000-01 season.

Tobin's record breaking 446th game is due to be played on Saturday December 16, in the Power's home match against Eastern Pride at Carrington Park, Bathurst.

Tobin, who played 113 matches for Australia, received offers from clubs in the Netherlands and Belgium but said he had no regrets.

If he had left Australia, he wouldn't have been celebrating his 445th NSL appearance on Sunday against Sydney Olympic at Belmore Sports Ground.

Then this weekend he will break that record when Power play Eastern Pride in Bathurst.

"It's not something that I've thought about too much," said Tobin, who equalled the record set by former Adelaide City team-mate Sergio Melta between 1977 and 1995.

"I'm certain that it's not (going to affect the way I play) because I haven't focused on it too much."

That's not to say that the milestone doesn't represent a special moment in Tobin's career, which started with Adelaide City on May 14, 1984.

"It's something I'll look at a little more when I finish playing," he said.

"It's certainly important to me but there's also the job at hand and preparing for the next game."

At the age of 35, Tobin says he hasn't lost his enthusiasm for soccer and has no immediate plans for retirement.

He said he would assess his playing future when his Parramatta contract expires at the end of next season.

SPOTLIGHT ON
Joe Miller
PARRAMATTA POWER

Parramatta's Joe Miller demonstrated AGAINST Sydney United why coach Dave Mitchell was so keen to recruit him from the Scottish Premier League, scoring two awe-inspiring goals in three minutes to help the Power record a 3-2 home win.

Miller's first goal, a sublime curling right foot shot around United's goalkeeper Brett Hughes in the 41st minute, was followed by a neat chip into the back of the net in the 44th minute from the Scottish import after he spotted Hughes standing off his line.

Such flair and experience is sure to prove crucial for Parramatta in the race to finish top-six at the end of the season.

SuperSoccer: You scored two goals in three minutes against Sydney United, how do you view your performance in the context of the game?
Joe Miller: I was happy with my goals because both came as a result of me outsmarting the opposing goalkeeper.

They also helped us build a nice comfortable 3-0 lead heading into half-time.

Unfortunately we gave away two stupid goals in the second half that we were very disappointed about because we'd been hoping to keep a clean sheet.

SuperSoccer: You joined the Power this season from the Scottish Premier League. How did your transfer come about and how are you enjoying your time in Australia so far?
Joe Miller: I started my career at Aberdeen FC under Sir Alex Ferguson during the 1984/85 season and was there until he went to Manchester United in 1987.

I had the option to go with Sir Alex to Manchester United or to Liverpool but I would have had to wait for about six months and in the meantime, Aberdeen accepted a transfer fee offer of £750,000 from Celtic, which was a record for a 19-year-old at the time, so I went there instead.

I was at Celtic for six years, then I went back to Aberdeen for five years, before joining Dundee United for a year. I was supposed to go to the US last year from Dundee but the deal fell through and that is when Dave Mitchell got in touch with a friend of mine that works over here in Australia and invited me to come out to take a look at the club.

I had already spoken to Stuart Munro at Carlton and the Northern Spirit in the past but the timing hadn't been right because I thought I was going to America.

When I came out to take a look at the Parramatta set-up, I liked what I saw and I liked the fact Dave wanted to make the club more professional like those in Europe.

So I moved out during the Olympics and since then, I've really been enjoying myself.

Australia's a fantastic place and it's been easy to settle into the club.

Really, my only concern is that the weather conditions are going to be a big factor for me here because I'm not used to the heat.

SuperSoccer: What are Parramatta's aspirations for this season and what role do you see yourself playing in achieving those aims?
Joe Miller: I know the club signed me because it was looking for someone that could create things and play off the forwards but Parramatta also knew I could play as a winger because I'd spent most of my career doing that.

The club is only new and it's important we don't set our standards too high, too soon, but I want to help Parramatta make it to the Top Six this year and then take it from there.

I think the team really needs to achieve a top-six result because Dave Mitchell has spent quite a bit bringing myself, Dave Lee and Alex Tobin to the club to add experience.

SuperSoccer: What do you rate as the highlights of your career so far?
Joe Miller: Transferring to Celtic, the club I supported as a boy, was certainly a highlight, especially because the year I joined was its centenary year and we won the Scottish Championship and Scottish FA Cup double.

SuperSoccer: What are your ambitions beyond this season?
Joe Miller: I'm contracted to Parramatta for one season and I'll take things from there but regardless, I'm only 33 so I hope to carry on playing for another three or four years.

With acknowledgement to Soccer Australia.

SCOREBOARD

SOCCER NSW PREMIER LEAGUE

		P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1	Blacktown City	6	5	1	0	13	4	16
2	Bonnyrigg	4	3	0	1	13	6	9
3	Belconnen	6	3	0	3	13	10	9
4	Central Coast	6	3	0	3	8	6	9
5	Leichhardt	5	2	1	2	7	5	7
6	Parramatta	4	2	1	1	6	5	7
7	St George	5	2	1	2	7	11	7
8	Canterbury	4	2	0	2	3	5	6
9	Penrith	6	0	2	4	5	14	2
10	Sutherland	6	0	2	4	5	14	2

NSW PREMIER LEAGUE ROUND 2
Tuesday 5 December
Leichhardt 4 St George 0

NSW PREMIER LEAGUE ROUND 6
Saturday 9 December
Sutherland 0 Central Coast 3
Blacktown City 2 St George 2
Leichhardt 0 Penrith 0
Belconnen 2 Bonnyrigg 4
Sunday 10 December
Parramatta 3 Canterbury 0

NSW PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE ROUND 2
Tuesday 5 December

PREMIER LEAGUE (Youth Grade)

		P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1	Leichhardt	5	5	0	0	18	2	15
2	Blacktown City	6	4	1	1	16	9	13
3	Central Coast	6	3	1	2	11	12	10
4	Belconnen	6	3	0	3	13	15	9
5	Parramatta	4	2	2	0	6	4	8
6	Bonnyrigg	4	2	0	2	7	7	6
7	Sutherland	6	1	3	2	10	11	6
8	Canterbury	4	1	1	2	5	6	4
9	Penrith	6	0	2	4	6	15	2
10	St George	5	0	0	5	3	14	0

Leichhardt 3 St George 0

NSW PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE ROUND 6
Saturday 9 December
Sutherland 2 Central Coast 2
Blacktown City 3 St George 0
Leichhardt 5 Penrith 0
Belconnen 2 Bonnyrigg 5
Sunday 10 December
Parramatta 1 Canterbury 0

NYL (Northern Div)

		P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1	A.I.S.	9	8	0	1	22	7	24
2	Northern Spirit	7	6	0	1	19	5	18
3	Marconi Youth	7	5	1	1	11	2	16
4	Sydney United	7	5	0	2	15	9	16
5	Parramatta Power	7	4	1	2	14	10	13
6	Wollongong	6	3	2	1	13	7	11
7	Q.A.S.	10	3	1	6	17	26	10
8	Marconi Colts	7	3	0	4	17	10	9
9	Canberra Cosmos	7	2	2	3	13	13	8
10	N.S.W.I.S.	7.	2	2	3	5	8	8
11	Sydney Olympic	6	2	1	3	11	11	7
12	Newcastle Youth	7	2	1	4	8	8	7
13	Olympic Academy	8	1	1	6	9	17	4
14	Newcastle Colts	5	1	1	4	1	12	3

NSW Premier League

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE ROUND 7
Friday 28 December
Northern Spirit 0 Marconi 0

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

		P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1	South Melbourne	9	5	3	1	20	9	18
2	Perth	9	5	2	2	18	9	17
3	Sydney Olympic	9	5	2	2	14	7	17
4	Wollongong	9	5	2	2	17	13	17
5	Carlton	8	3	4	1	13	9	13
6	Northern Spirit	9	3	4	2	12	8	13
7	Marconi	9	3	4	2	11	8	13
8	Parramatta	9	4	1	4	14	13	13
9	Melbourne Knights	9	4	1	4	14	15	13
10	Sydney United	9	3	3	3	13	18	12
11	Canberra	9	3	2	4	16	16	11
12	Adelaide	8	3	1	4	10	16	10
13	Brisbane	9	2	3	4	12	16	9
14	Auckland	9	2	2	5	13	19	8
15	Newcastle	9	1	3	5	6	19	6
16	Eastern Pride	9	0	3	6	11	19	3

Auckland 2 Melbourne Knights 2
Eastern Pride 2 Brisbane 2
Sunday 10 December
Sydney United 2 Canberra 2
South Melbourne 4 Wollongong 2
Sydney Olympic 0 Parramatta 2
Perth 4 Newcastle 0
Carlton v Adelaide postponed

WOMEN'S NSL
NSW Sapphires 5 Northern NSW 0

ASICS NSL BIG MATCH REPORT

North Sydney lights go out on and off the field as Sydney derby fizzles

By Bryan Cokely

NORTHERN SPIRIT 0
MARCONI 0

'BAD play stops lights in the 53rd minute at North Sydney Cricket Oval.'

No not the Pura Milk Cup.

This was Northern Spirit versus Marconi in round 9 of the National Soccer League.

In a listless scoreless draw played in balmy yet breezy conditions neither side could excite the 6,251 crowd as much as the temporary loss of the permanent lights on the hill side of the ground.

In fairness to both teams they mustered a handful of half chances throughout the game but the overall impression led to a dispiriting round of jeers at full time.

Northern Spirit coach Graham Arnold commendably avoided excuses but quickly bought the one on offer from the press corps at the post match conference.

Yes last Sunday's searing heat at Carlton's Epping Stadium had drained his players, and training at daytime through the week had exacerbated their fatigue which he said left "all eleven players flat."

SuperSoccer had raised the 'hot and humid' issue last week claiming that temperatures over 30 degrees C are not only potentially dangerous to players but cheat the fans of quality, pacey, enthusiastic football.

It would seem that the Epping Stadium fixture cheated two sets of fans on consecutive weeks in two different States.

The Spirit - Marconi derby, so often a fiery affair with stud bearing tackles not uncommon, was niggley early on but it wasn't until Scott Thomas fired up moments from the end that this looked vaguely like a derby match.

Angelo Costanzo was the target of a succession of spoiling trips early on from Foster and Enes, while makeshift African defender Simon Bell frustrated Spirit's Brazilian striker Alex Moriera.

Bell had switched from left wing back to left sided stopper in the 7th minute after Mark Babic retired hurt with a hamstring strain.

Initially Bell looked lost but Spirit never took advantage of this by remaining fairly static in their positional play.

By the time Bell found his feet in his new position the opportunity had passed.

Both sides fielded a 5-3-2 formation and without the energy to overcome their immediate opponent, tactically it was a stalemate.

Apart from Costanzo for Marconi and Foster and Burgess for Spirit, there was little imaginative play.

Burgess and Moriera both failed to hit the target with headers from good positions, and Burgess side-footed the ball across the face of goal following good lead up work from Foster and Thomas.

Burgess expected his teammates to follow up at the far post.

They did not and in hindsight a volley might have been his best option.

Marconi had chances too.

Royce Brownlie intercepted a misplaced Cunico pass on 23 minutes and blazed a fierce 30 metre shot narrowly wide of Henderson's left post.

Ten minutes later Brownlie headed wide of the right post from a Brendan Renaud cross following a quick break upfield.

At home, Graham Arnold is reluctant to change his tactics against any team looking to counter attack, leaving his side looking tentative.

He reasoned that Mendez could have provided the spark.

"We missed Mendez, someone who can make things happen, we had three grafters and grinders in midfield so then you rely on your wide men," said Arnold.

But Mendez has played in games like this before without having an effect, notably against Olympic in the opening round.

Having been stung on many occasions, Arnold is now resigned to settling for a point at home, when faced with defensive opposition.

"Last year we would have lost those games," he said.

True it is an improvement as Spirit remain undefeated at home this term, and while they pick up points they are a chance for the finals.

When Northern Spirit produce attacking football they usually do so against teams who come to North Sydney with an open mind.

Hence the attractive performances against Perth and Auckland this season.

Marconi coach Eddie Krncevic while not ecstatic was fairly pleased with the point, and felt his team had played well.

He agreed that taking points away from home is an important habit and feels while this occurs and they maintain winning home form Marconi will be "there or thereabouts at the end of the season."

The agreeable Krncevic also concurred with the reasoning that it is sensible to train each day at the time of the next fixture.

"Yeh, time adaptation. Looking back at my European experience we used to train at what time we used to play," he said.

"If we played at 3 o' clock we would train at 3 o'clock."

Marconi trained all week in the cool of evening and Krncevic felt that the time adaptation and avoiding the heat was possibly advantageous to his sides' performance.

Perhaps Spirit will rethink their training schedules for future home games but next weekend they face another potentially hot one away to Melbourne Knights.

Mendez should be fit but Arnold with a groin strain and Robbie Enes with a wrench of the knee both hobbled off against Marconi.

Robbie Slater is a long term casualty.

The Stallions have a derby of another kind when their Adelaide cousins visit Marconi Stadium this weekend.

Babic will be in a race to recover while Mike Smith is closing in on full fitness and may be a chance of returning to the squad.

However Krncevic has made it clear that Chad Gibson will not be involved as he waits to head overseas in two weeks.

Northern Spirit 0
Marconi Stallions 0
Venue: North Sydney Oval
Referee: Jeremy Blaney
Attendance: 6,251
Cautions: S Thomas 87'C Foster 9'S Bell 78'
Northern Spirit: 20 Paul Henderson (gk) 2 Michael Cunico 3 Matthew Langdon 4 Matthew Bingley 6 Scott Thomas 8 Robert Enes (-78') 9 Alex Moreira (-65') 11 Troy Cranney 12 Ben Burgess 25 Craig Foster 30 Graham Arnold (-75'). Substitutes 14 Noel Spencer (+78') 17 Paul Bilokapic (+75') 19 Ryan Griffiths (+65') 1 John Perosh (gk)
Marconi Stallions: 1 David Aceski (gk) 3 Mark Babic (-7') 4 Angelo Costanzo 5 Dominic Longo 7 James Afkos 10 John Maisano (-83') 14 Buddy Farah 15 Royce Brownlie (-81') 21 Simon Bell 22 Kris Trajanovski 27 Grant Last. Substitutes 8 Darren McDonald (+83') 16 Harry Karl (+81') 19 Brendan Renaud (+7') 20 Michael Turnbull (gk)

ASICS NSL BIG MATCH REPORT

Cervinski blasts late equaliser in Auckland

By SRI KRISHNAMURTHI

FOOTBALL KINGZ 2
MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 2

THE Football Kingz were denied an unlikely come-from-behind victory by an injury time equaliser in their national soccer league match against the Melbourne Knights at Ericsson Stadium on Friday night.

Until late in the second half - coinciding with Harry Ngata replacing Aaron Silva in the 54th minute - the Kingz were lacklustre but they suddenly burst into life with two late goals to hit the front 2-1 right on full-time.

But two minutes into injury time Adrian Cervinski ensured the draw with an easy shot on goal which he put away to deny the Kingz their first victory in six matches.

"It ended pretty amazing, but we're not playing with confidence and we really needed a win tonight," said Mark Burton, who scored the Kingz's first goal in the 87th minute.

"A lot of words were said at half-time and we came out and gave it our best in the second, what more can we say.

"We seem to start without any urgency and that is a mental thing that we need to get right before our next game against Brisbane."

Knights' skipper Jason Vukadin expressed mixed emotions about his side's performance.

"We can't be happy with that. We had a lot of chances but we didn't knock them in," he said.

"But to come 1000km and get a point, I guess you have to be happy with that."

The game didn't spark into action until late in the second half, mainly in the last five minutes when three goals were scored.

The Knights capitalised on their early dominance in the 34th minute with Toto Da Costa floating a cross from the left which had Kingz goalkeeper Chris Marsh coming off his line too slowly and leaving Alex Kiratzoglou free for an easy header to put the visitors ahead 1-0.

The Kingz should have had an equaliser from a free kick in the 85th minute but a shot from Dennis Ibrahim, on for Aaran Lines, was deflected over the bar.

A minute later Marsh pulled off a superb save at the feet of Andy Vargas to set up the Kingz at the other end where Tim Stevens's cross was sharply nodded home by Burton at the far post to edge the home side ahead 2-1.

In the 90th minute Stevens was again involved when he lobbed a ball which was headed into the path of Wynton Rufer, who smashed home a superb left-footed volley to put the Kingz in front. .

Their joy was short-lived as Cervinski, the best player in the match, slammed home the equaliser in the 92nd minute.

Kingz FC 2
Melbourne Knights 2
Venue:Ericsson Stadium
Referee: Mark Shield
Attendance: 5,559
Cautions: A Da Costa 17'J Rajher 22'A Cervinski 27'
Kingz FC: 20 Chris Marsh (gk) 2 Che Bunce (-73') 3 Aaran Lines (-67') 4 Levent Osman 5 Jonathon Perry 7 Wynton Rufer 15 Ivan Vicelich 21 Riki Van Steeden 22 Aaron Silva (-54') 25 Tim Stevens 30 Mark Burton . Substitutes 10 Andreas Bluhm (+73') 11 Dennis Ibrahim (+67') 12 Heremaia Ngata (+54') 1 Julio Cuello (gk)
Melbourne Knights: 20 Lupce Acevski (gk) 3 Rodrigo Vargas 4 Sasa Ognenovski 5 Jason Vukadin 6 Joey Rajher 8 Dragi Nastevski 9 Joel Porter (-68') 16 Alex Kiratzoglou 18 Andy Vargas 22 Antonio Da Costa (-76') 25 Adrian Cervinski
Substitutes
11 Xhezair Sulemani (+76' -81') 13 Antun Kovacic (+81') 14 Paul Magdic (+68') 29 Robert Gras-

Rech double cancelled by plucky Pride

EASTERN PRIDE 2
BRISBANE STRIKERS 2

THE Eastern Pride remain winless in the national soccer league after playing out an entertaining 2-2 draw with the Brisbane Strikers at Mobil Park on Friday night.

The Pride was forced to come from behind in the second half after Brisbane striker Fernando Rech scored a double to cancel out an early goal from the home side's Daniel Watkins.

Rech gave his side the lead 15 minutes into the second half when he seized on a mistake from Pride keeper Eugene Galekovic.

But with 18 minutes remaining, the Pride responded through John Hutchinson to ensure the game ended in a stalemate.

Pride coach Jeff Hopkins was relatively pleased with the result although he remains frustrated with his side's inability to chalk up its first win.

"It was a hard-fought game," Hopkins said.

"I'm pleased with the way we fought the game out and at least we got a point.

"But it's been a long time since we've gained three points and we need to post a victory."

The Pride started the game in a positive manner, with striker Daniel Watkins putting the Strikers defence under plenty of pressure.

Watkins was eventually rewarded when he forced Strikers `keeper Daniel Duke into error.

Duke's clearing kick rebounded off Watkins and the ball ricocheted into the net to hand the Pride a 1-0 lead.

The Strikers began to work their way into the game, with veteran midfielder Nick Meredith and striker Paul Foster trying hard.

But it was the Pride who created the next chance, with Watkins nearly scoring his second in the 31st minute when he connected with a Juan Nilo cross, forcing a great save from Duke.

Brisbane continued to pressure the Eastern Pride defence and in the 44th minute Rech equalised when he latched onto a Meredith free kick.

The second half was an even affair, with the Pride having a goal disallowed in the 53rd minute when Clayton Bell was deemed off-side.

The Strikers took advantage of the missed opportunity to take the lead from a set piece in the 58th minute.

Meredith's free kick was spilled by Eugene Galekovic and Rech snapped up the mistake to score his second for the match.

But the Pride made sure the sides shared the points when Hutchinson headed home Robbie Puca's chipped cross 18 minutes from time.

Brisbane coach John Kosmina said he was not overly disappointed with the result despite his side losing another opportunity to close the gap on the Top Six.

"I'm not really disappointed although we gave away a silly goal," Kosmina said. "We managed to regain our composure and finish with a point."

Eastern Pride 2 (Watkins, J Hutchinson 72') Brisbane Strikers 2 (F Rech 44'/58')
Venue: Mobil Park Referee: Perry Mur Attendance: 1,399
Cautions:S Smeltz 46'+J Harris 77'
Eastern Pride: 20 Eugen Galekovic (gk) 2 Dean Fak 4 Dong Ki Kim 8 Clayton Bell 10 Robbie Puca 11 John Hutchinson 14 Juan Nilo 17 Paul Wearne (-88') 19 Adam Griffiths 25 Marcus Stergiopoulos Substitutes 5 Ante Deak 9 Neville Roach (+76') 15 Jonathon Buhagiar (+88')
Brisbane Strikers: 1 Daniel Duke (gk) 3 Shane Stefanutto 5 Matthew Bell 9 Paul Foster 13 Stuart McLaren 14 Jade North 15 Andrew Davidson 16 Shane Smeltz (-79') 17 Jeromy Harris 18 Nick Meredith (-89') 22 Fernando Rech Substitutes 7 Russell Miner (+79') 8 Adam Webber 21 Lawrence Drake (+89')

NATIONAL GRABS

"I think it would be devastating for the supporters (if Carlton went to Adelaide). I've had calls this morning from True Blues members and members of the general public who come and see Carlton play and they feel very saddened by the prospect of not having a team. I think Adelaide is not the answer for supporters in Melbourne." Nick Monteleone, co-founder of Carlton supporters' group the True Blues

"We are slipping into a groove, which is encouraging, provided we remain intense and focussed. Marconi and Spirit games are always tight and hard, and this game will be no different." Graham Arnold.

"Playing Spirit at North Sydney Oval is always a special event, Friday being no exception. We look forward to testing Spirit's undefeated home record." Eddie Krncevic.

"After losing in Perth, we have to organise the team for a tough game against Carlton." Zoran Matic.

"With so much uncertainty around, it will be good just to hear the referee's whistle for kick-off." Stuart Munro.

"Injury problems and Brisbane's surprise win against top side Olympic, will make this a real tough game for us." Jeff Hopkins.

"Injuries are mounting up, with no less that six players unavailable for selection. Last week's win against Olympic has restored confidence and we are looking forward to collecting the points in Morwell." John Kosmina.

"After four losses in a row to Newcastle, we should turn the corner at our next game." Bernd Stange.

"After a poor performance last week, the match in Perth is a grand final for us on one of the hardest road trips in the competition." Lee Sterrey.

"Following a good win away at Canberra, we now face our toughest challenge to date, in current Champions and second-placed Wollongong Wolves." Mike Petersen.

"No team expects to go to Bob Jane Stadium and come away with three points, but we are hopeful of doing so." Ron Corry.

"We were unfortunate last week not to get a result, after dropping two points at home against Brisbane. The players need to be 90-minute performers to get three points against a well-driven Canberra team." Alan Hunter.

"Last week was a disappointing loss against a stronger team. Sunday will see two similarly placed teams competing, and hopefully we can come home with a win." Tom Sermanni.

"It is very important to bounce back after last week's loss." Branko Culina.

"Olympic have the best team in the league, they play a very fluent attacking game and will be very tough on Sunday. Hopefully after a good result last week, we will be able to combat them with our own attacking flair." David Mitchell.

"That's the fascination of soccer, everywhere in the world you have such opponents that you just can't beat. We are a little bit afraid to play Newcastle but we have to turn a corner now and it's a good chance, they are in a little trouble. But I know Lee Sterrey, he'll have some special, defensive plan. If we can't score a goal it could prey on the minds of our players, the Newcastle saga continues, that's the fascination of soccer and that's why we must win." Bernd Stange.

"If we play to our game plan, keep it wide and don't change anything I think we can come away with the points. Newcastle are having a rough trot at the moment, but in past times we came over here with the same form when I was with the Breakers and were able to lift our performance and beat the Glory. The pressure was always on the Glory, we had nothing to lose and we enjoyed the game and enjoyed the atmosphere. Newcastle play a defensive style of soccer, they get everyone behind the ball and when Perth came at us, we would try to get them on the counter and get a long ball up to our fast men." Shane Pryce.

"If we had two or three players who were flat I would have been more upset about not winning the game but all 11 players on the field were tired and flat. I feel sorry for the spectators because the game was a non-event." Graham Arnold.

"Apart from the first 10 minutes I thought we controlled most of the game. The second half was scrappy but we battled away and we've taken a point. Overall I thought we were quite solid." Eddie Krncevic.

ASICS NSL BIG MATCH REPORT

Six goal thriller marred by US ref

By MICHAEL LYNCH

SOUTH MELBOURNE 4
WOLLONGONG CITY 2

SOUTH Melbourne eventually got the better of a gripping, fiercely contested and enthralling battle 4-2, but Wollongong did enough in an action-packed second half to feel that it might have earned a point. But once again this season, the main talking point was the quality of the officiating of the match, this time by an American referee, Kevin Stott, in Australia on a refereeing exchange program.

Corry was particularly incensed after seeing his side surrender its early lead to a penalty, and then watched as South goalkeeper Michael Petkovic was shown only a yellow card after he had careered out of the penalty area and hauled down Scott Chipperfield as the Wollongong star headed towards the goal with only Petkovic to beat.

"It should have been a red card. They put a guy in charge of the game who could not control the standard of football and it almost ruined it," said Corry.

Both coaches were angry about the American. There was controversy over Wollongong's opener, scored by Chipperfield, from a cross by Matt Horsley whom South believed was offside: and then the home team received a penalty a minute later to equalise when striker Vaughan Coveny was sent crashing to the turf by Wolves keeper Grant Barlow.

In the second half, Wollongong defender George Souris, booked in the first half, dived in and fouled South winger Con Boutsianis for an obvious-looking yellow-card offence. Stott kept his cards in his pocket, and Souris stayed on the pitch. A minute later came the Petkovic incident, when he too should have gone.

The drama did not stop until the final whistle as three of the six goals came in a whirlwind five-minute period of stoppage time.

As injury time began, South held a slender 2-1 lead. Wolves had come close shortly before the 90minutes concluded when substitute Saso Petrovski smashed a shot against the post.

But they looked dead and buried as the clock ticked past the 92-minute mark and South substitute Goran Lozanovski, who had replaced Coveny with half an hour remaining, hit a hopeful looking shot-cum-cross from wide on the right which looped past Barlow and went into the net off the underside of the bar.

Paul Reid pulled one back with a 25-metre shot a minute later. Just when it seemed there could be no more twists and turns, Boutsianis made it safe for a jittery South when he shot home from a cross by substitute Vas Kalageracos. South had had the better of the first half, and should have added to its single Paul Trimboli effort from the penalty spot.

But Wollongong took the game to its opposition in the second period and made it a terrific contest. Andy Vlahos sent the home fans into raptures when he gave South the lead in the 78th minute after drilling a shot into the far corner of the net after a Boutsianis cross from the left.

South Melbourne 4 (Trimboli pen 26, Vlahos 78, Lozanovski 92+, Boutsianis 94+)
Wollongong Wolves 2 (Chipperfield 25, Reid 93+)
Venue: Bob Jane Stadium. Crowd: 7,589. Referee: Kevin Stott.
South Melbourne: Petkovic, Durakovic, Kisnorbo, Clarkson, De Amicis, Coveny (Lozanovski 58), Susa, Panopoulos, Boutsianis, Vlahos (Kalogeracos 79), Trimboli (c). Subs not used - Iosifidis, Theoklitos.
Wolves: Barlow, Cervinski, Blake, Souris, Ceccoli (Mennillo 76), Horsley (c), Reid, Huxley, Stanton (Petrovski 76), Young, Chipperfield. Subs not used: O'Grady, Angelov.

SOCCER SATURDAY

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Join Arlo White & Craig Wilson for the very latest soccer news every Saturday morning.

Joe Miller's Magic Power

By Glenn Cullen

SYDNEY OLYMPIC 0
PARRAMATTA POWER 2

WITH one of the strongest squads, biggest bank balances and best coaches in the competition it was only a matter of time before Parramatta Power produced 90 minutes of spectacular football.

Unfortunately they didn't earn the full cigar with Sunday's 2-0 win over Sydney Olympic but with the best 60 minutes of soccer the Power has played this year, there were few complaints.

After 30 minutes of dreary, defence orientated football, the sleeping giant of this season's national soccer league awoke to show they may be a premiership contender yet.

Led by Scottish import Joe Miller, the visitors found their feet in the latter stages of the first half.

Miller was a few paces off the action when midfielder Steve Berry floated a cross in the 29th minute but was right on the money to put the Power in front five minutes later.

The 33-year-old midfielder took advantage of a great break on the right wing by Milan Blagojevic, cracking a ball just outside the box for Miller to finish off.

Buoyed by a half-time lead, the visitors went into overdrive in the second stanza, shutting Olympic out in attack and making a mockery of the competition leader's usually frugal defence.

Miller teamed with replacement striker Joel Griffiths to embarrass the home side, creating a swag of opportunities, only to be denied by `keeper Clint Bolton.

The Scotsman eventually put Olympic to the sword in the 81st minute, sizing up three defenders, beating a flat-footed Glenn Moore and drilling the ball past Bolton to give the Power its best win of the season.

Earlier Olympic dominated, with Greg Owens creating two opportunities in the first half.

The Power only kept on level pegging through the excellent defensive work of Alex Tobin who equalled the all-time NSL game record (445).

Power coach David Mitchell was delighted with his team's second half performance but rated the defence as important to his side's second half attacking blitz.

"Olympic are a very dangerous side...I was thankful the defence held because in the previous weeks we tended to cave in and concede a goal," he said.

Olympic coach Branko Culina conceded a whitewash had been brewing for a few weeks but lamented his team's growing injury toll which fortunately wasn't added to tonight.

Both Mitchell and Culina indicated a player raid on the fledgling Carlton club was not out of the question but the Olympic coach was most adamant he needed an Archie Thompson-like player up front.

"We have a need for a striker - we haven't scored a goal from normal play for five weeks," Culina said.

"Greg Owens and Nicky Carle have done a super job but neither of them are strikers. The kids can only do it for so long - we build them up in the media as superstars which they're not...I'm delighted with them but they are not strikers who have done a super job."

Sydney Olympic 0 Parramatta Power 2 (J Miller 34'/80')
Venue: Belmore Sports Ground Referee: Brett Hugo Attendance: 4,802
Cautions: T Halpin 59'M Blagojevic 63'W Ardone 65'
Sydney Olympic: 1 Clint Bolton (gk) 2 Sebastian Sinozic 3 Lindsay Wilson (-46') 4 Paul Kohler 6 Ante Juric 9 Mass Sarr 10 Troy Halpin 12 Glenn Moore 13 Damon Collina 14 Greg Owens 19 Nick Carle (-77') Substitutes 17 Elias Augerinos 24 Andy Amegashie (+46') 26 Anthony Doumanis (+77') 20 John Karoubas (gk)
Parramatta Power: 1 Andrew Crews (gk) 3 Ahmad Elrich 4 Nick Orlic 5 Alex Tobin 8 Walter Ardone (-71') 9 Joe Miller 11 Steve Berry (-46') 12 Damien Brown 13 Milan Blagojevic 22 Joe Vrkic 28 Peter Bennett Substitutes 10 Joel Griffiths (+46') 23 Andrew Clark (+71') 29 David Lee 24 Liam Reddy (gk)

ASICS NSL BIG MATCH REPORT

Popovich screamer denies United

By Adrian Warren

SYDNEY UNITED 2
CANBERRA COSMOS 2

A RARE goal from Canberra defender Toplica Popovich earned his side a last gasp 2-2 draw with Sydney United in a national soccer league thriller at the Sydney United Sports Centre on Sunday.

Both sides scored a goal in injury time at the end of the second half and each finished with 10 men after referee Simon Micallef brandished two red cards in the last 15 minutes.

United, which trailed 1-0 at halftime, appeared to have stolen maximum points when substitute Commins Menapi scored from close range.

Cosmos refused to surrender and Popovich earned the visitors a point with a 25-metre left foot screamer in the dying seconds.

"That's his one for his career, from that kind of distance I wouldn't have allowed him to shoot," Canberra coach Tom Sermanni joked of Toplica, who has scored only a handful of NSL goals.

Both sides created several chances in a free-flowing game which also produced a rash of bookings in addition to the two dismissals.

Canberra forward Alex Castro, who opened the scoring with a fifth minute header, was dismissed in the 77th minute after being booked twice in three minutes for dissent, the second time after his team had been awarded a free kick.

"When you get two yellow cards for dissent within five minutes, that's just something that's a no-no and something that I don't tolerate," Sermanni said.

His Sydney counterpart Alan Hunter, similarly rued the indiscipline of his midfielder Tom Pondeljak, who was sent off in the 84th minute after receiving a second yellow card.

"I don't think either side deserved three points based on the amount of possession that we gave away, especially us in the first half," Hunter said.

"It's unfortunate that once again we had to give an early Christmas present away before we responded."

When Castro headed home a cross from Jon Angelucci, it was the first time this season Canberra had scored in the opening half.

United went close with long range shots from Pondeljak and captain Aytek Genc before the break and Shane Webb screwed a shot wide after Canberra goalkeeper Angelo Konstantinou dropped the ball.

Veteran striker Vlatko Arambasic, back in the team after being injured in round four, inspired Sydney's revival.

His cross from the right was tapped home by midfield Ante Deur for a 66th minute equaliser and his run and shot also set up Menapi's late strike.

"I'd given up the game after 2-1 and at the end after Alex (Castro) was off, I was quite happy to hang on," Sermanni said.

"I thought after 60 minutes, we probably deserved three points. After 94, we deserved no points, so it's evened out."

Sydney United 2 (A Deur 66'C Menapi 93'+)
Canberra Cosmos 2 (A Castro 5'T Popovich 94'+)
Venue: Sydney United Sports Centre Referee: Simon Micallef Attendance: 3,254
Cautions: T Pondeljak 45'F Awaritefe 45'+M Phillips 61'J Angelucci 62'A Castro 74' D Arranz 89'
Red Cards:T Pondeljak 84'A Castro 76'
Sydney United: 1 Brett Hughes (gk) 3 Danny Burt 5 Richard Plesa 9 Zlatko Arambasic 11 Tom Pondeljak 13 Ante Deur 15 Aytec Genc (-65') 17 Francis Awaritefe (-58') 18 Goran Talevski 19 Shane Webb 21 Terry Palapanis (-27') Substitutes 12 Tom Maric (+27') 14 Kain Rastall (+65') 16 Commins Menapi (+58') 20 Steve Tolios (gk)
Canberra Cosmos: 1 Angelo Konstantinou (gk) 3 Toplica Popovich 5 Nicholas Purdue 0 Mark Hagger (-79') 9 Alex Castro 10 Jon Angelucci 11 David Arranz 13 Shane Lyons 14 Andy Rakic (-78') 15 Marcus Phillips (-69') 19 Hiroshi Miyazawa Substitutes 4 Andrew Ravanello (+69') 6 Naoki Imaya (+78') 18 Brad Scott (+79') 20 Barney Smith (gk)

Glory ends Newcastle hoodoo with 4-0 victory

By Andrew Hamilton

PERTH GLORY 4
NEWCASTLE UNITED 0

PERTH Glory ended Newcastle United's undefeated record in the West with an emphatic 4-0 victory at Perth Oval on Sunday night.

United had not dropped a point in four trips across the Nullabor but the Glory hammered a goal for every loss in a first half blitz that all but ended the game.

Workhorse striker Bobby Despotovski was the destroyer having a hand in the opening goal and snaring two for himself before being rested in the scoreless second half.

The margin could have been worse but for veteran Newcastle keeper Bob Catlin who recovered from the first half onslaught to pull off several desperate saves.

Brazilian import Edgar Junior started the rout in the 19th minute with his first goal for the club in his 44th appearance.

The goal was set up by Despotovski who jinked his way into some space and then clipped the ball back into the path of the barnstorming midfielder who sidestepped a defender and struck the ball wide of Catlin.

The second came in the 28th minute when John Carbone sent a perfectly positioned cross to the top of the box for defender Jamie Harnwell to slam home. Then it was Despotovski's turn.

His first goal came when he made good position to receive an impressive through ball from exciting young recruit Gary Faria.

He added another two minutes later when he capped off a deadly counter attack that had started deep in the Glory's defence.

Rock solid sweeper Ljubo Milicevic gained possession and transferred it wide for stand in captain Scott Miller who raced the ball along the right wing and drew the defence before pushing the ball forward for Despotovski who had time to straighten, steady and send the ball rocketing past the outstretched arm of the hapless Catlin.

Newcastle's only real chances came in the opening 15 minutes.

The first came just as Perth's Newcastle recruit Shane Pryce warned it would, on the counter attack in the 15th minute when United cleared from defence with a long ball that set Daniel McBreen with a one on one contest with Glory's keeper Jason Petkovic.

But Petkovic, who is building a reputation as the stingiest keeper in the land, showed no consideration for his own well being dived at McBreen's feet to deflect the strike.

Minutes later he was back in the action when he moved smartly to make sure there was no daylight between himself and the upright from an Anthony Magnacca free kick.

Perth Glory 4 (E Junior 18'J Harnwell 28'B Despotovski 40'/41') Newcastle 0
Venue: Perth Oval Referee: Angelo Nardi Attendance: 11,873
Cautions: S Miller 29'B Despotovski 40'J Harnwell 63'J Carbone 66'D McBreen 2'T McManus 24'P Tsekenis 46'A Roberts 63'P Juchniewicz 76'
Perth Glory: 1 Jason Petkovic (gk) 2 Robert Trajkovski (-53') 3 Jamie Harnwell 4 Ljubo Milicevic 7 Scott Miller 10 Bobby Despotovski (-53') 15 Edgar Aldrighi Junior (-63') 16 Damian Mori 17 Gary Faria 18 Shane Pryce 19 John Carbone Substitutes 12 Peter Buljan (+53') 14 Dion Valle (+53') 21 Paul (PJ) Roberts (+63') 30 Luke Tomich (gk)
Newcastle: 1 Bob Catlin (gk) 3 Andrew Roberts 4 Chris Zoricich 5 Todd McManus 6 Glenn Sprod 8 Mark Wilson 9 Anthony Magnacca (-76') 10 John Buonavoglia (-71') 11 Peter Tsekenis 13 Brad Wieczorek 19 Daniel McBreen (-46') Substitutes 14 Anthony Surjan (+46') 16 Vasko Trpcevski (+76') 21 Peter Juchniewicz

COKELY ON THE NSL

HOW good is the N.S.L? People want to compare it to overseas leagues and past eras of Australian Soccer.

There is an insecurity abroad amongst N.S.L. fans that is worrying.

The shaky financial foundations of Soccer Australia since the Iran loss have led to an instability, which has not provided a solid foundation from which the clubs can operate.

In turn it has led to insecurity of both the league and the clubs, who display defensiveness bordering on paranoia when the issues of poor performance, lack of crowds and tepid atmospheres at empty stadia are raised.

It was with a huge sense of relief that the dam broke on Saturday when the Sydney press treated their soccer readership with respect, by stifling the spin for once, and telling it like it is.

The game between Northern Spirit and Marconi was stunningly dull.

Now if you are a life-long soccer supporter you will read that statement, talk about it, wonder why, chew it over and turn up next week anyway, because rarely do you see a repeat performance so uninspiring, and in any case it's happened to your favourite team before.

But you still love them.

The Soccer media have a responsibility to promote the game to the best of its ability.

But we also have a responsibility to let the soccer public know that it is O.K. to have a dud game from time to time.

Soccer has picked up many new fans that have not been brought up on foreign leagues.

Indeed many younger fans have only been exposed to excitingly packaged Premier League highlights or Italian Serie A, as their entry into football.

What many do not realize is that there are dud games in those leagues every week.

Honestly there are.

And worse still it's a lot easier to watch a dud game on a balmy night in Perth, Melbourne or Sydney than it is on a freezing drizzling day somewhere in Europe.

But to answer the question on how good is the N.S.L. I believe we need to be patient and wait for the outcome of the N.S.L.'s restructure, through its recently established criteria for acceptance.

Clubs are being asked to provide evidence of financial stability and continuing revenue streams.

If you cannot meet the criteria you are out!

Hopefully then we will never see a repeat of the Sydney City farce of 1987 or Collingwood or Carlton.

The main issues revolve around corporate financing, enriching the profile in the mainstream media and ways to ensure the loss of talent overseas is balanced out by quality imports.

Coupling this with the return of name Australian players like Craig Foster.

Household names, players that are recognizable and promotable and above all can still provide value for money are an essential.

When the building blocks are in place and the N.S.L. shows strong leadership and quality administration then the remaining clubs can plan long term in a mature atmosphere where criticism is part and parcel of the game.

Meanwhile there are more entertaining games than there are dull ones each week, which provide value for money for the paying public.

Northern Spirit and Marconi had an off day.

Hopefully we are all big enough to deal with that.

Bryan Cokely is a former player with experience at a high level with Swansea City and Wollongong Wolves. He has also spent some time coaching. More recently he has written for Inside Soccer *and our sister publication,* Celtic-World. *Bryan brings a player's perspective to journalism.*

COMING IN 2001 .....
SuperSoccer on
TUESDAYS

ASICS PREMIER LEAGUE BIG MATCH REPORT

Eagleton delight as Coasties demolish Sutherland

NSW Premier League

By Greg Stock

SUTHERLAND SHARKS 0
CENTRAL COAST 3

"IT'S been a long time coming," said Coasties coach Dale Eggleton after watching his side demolish the Sutherland Sharks at Seymour Shaw Park last Saturday night.

"Up until tonight," continued Eggleton, "we've been playing well in matches but coming up short, usually by the odd goal.

"But tonight we did the hard yards and came away with a good result."

It wasn't an easy victory by any means but a strong second half saw the Coasties run roughshod over the Sharks in the last twenty minutes.

An early Michael Williams goal in the 3rd minute set the scene for the Coasties but it really wasn't until late in the second half that the they were able to secure all three points.

While most fans were barely settling into their seats, Williams came up trumps as he showed great skill and agility in chesting down a cross from Steve Cutler on the left, dribbling around two defenders and sending his strike into the top left corner of the Coasties goal.

It was a magical goal but sadly for the fans it would be the last of the goalmouth action for the first half, as both sides continued to frustrate each other with some strong defence and heavy tackling.

In the second half a free-kick to Steve Cutler awarded some 25 yards out, set the crowd alight.

From wide out on the left Cutler's dead-ball effort deceived Sharks goalkeeper Leo Premutico at the near post and slipped almost unnoticed into the net.

It was a sensational goal from the experienced Cutler, who appears to be back to his best form of a couple of seasons back. From there, the Coasties were never headed.

When Nathan Byrn latched onto a through ball from Adam Peatey and turned his strike across Premutico into the net, the Coasties had clearly won the day and taken their first away points for the season.

"It was hard stuff," continued Eggleton.

"There are no easy games in the Premier League and Sutherland really took it up to us.

"They deserve a lot of credit for the way in which they made us fight right throughout the match."

While they finished the stronger of the two sides, it must be said that Sutherland were at times their own worst enemies.

Too often they allowed themselves to lose possession of the football when they had the Central Coast defence stretched.

Their strikers McDonald and Trposki were ineffective and in the absence of skipper Grant Bard, did little to get their side going forward.

Even the injection of new signing Nick Pezzano in the second half could not arrest the Sharks decline as they struggled to hold the ball long enough to allow for patient build-ups.

While the Sharks struggled, the Coasties just seemed to get better as the game wore on.

Shane Knight was good early while Steve Cutler and Mick Williams until replaced were outstanding.

Time and time again they cut the Sharks midfield to pieces with simple passing moves or their ability to beat the first man and lay in a good cross.

Former Broadmeadows goalkeeper Darren Moore was also solid, keeping a clean sheet and denying two strong Sutherland chances in the second half with athletic saves.

While the Coasties celebrate their first away win for 2000/1 they will have to temper that with the visit of the league leaders Blacktown City next weekend, while for the hapless Sharks it doesn't get any easier with a road trip to the Serbian Centre and a date with Bonnyrigg.

Sutherland 0
Central Coast 3 (Williams 3' Cutler 60' Byrn 80')
Venue: Seymour Shaw Park, Miranda
Sutherland: 1.Leo Premutico, 2.Anthony Judge, 3.Jeremy Pettenon, 4.Sean Robertson, 5.Alen Stajcic, 6.Pat Darvill (19.Nick Pezzano 60'), 10.Iain McDonald (Dean Spresian 89'), 14.Goce Trposki, 15.Anthony Kanaan, 16.Colin McAusland, 20.Peter Pullicino; Subs Not Used : 22. Daniel Farias, 12.Ahmed Ibrahim, 18.Chris Zelvis.
Yellow Cards: Pullicino 36'
Central Coast: 20.Darren Moore, 2.Mitchell Daley, 4.Shaun Matthews, 5.Dane Hokin, 6.Steve Cutler, 7.Dane Hokin, 15.Peter Leary (17.Michael Coates 82'), 11.Peter Ritchie, 10.Michael Williams (14.Peter Preston 77'), 13.Clint Smith (9.Nathan Byrn 69'), 8.Shane Knight; Subs Not Used : 1.Scott Horvat, 19.Stuart Sontag.

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ASICS PREMIER LEAGUE BIG MATCH REPORT

Four goal Eagles trounce Belconnen at home

by Gary Vandeburgt

BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS 2
BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES 4

Bonnyrigg White Eagles scored a dominant 4-2 victory over a disappointing Belconnen Blue Devils in their Premier League clash at Greenway Oval Tuggeranong on Saturday night.

It was only the brilliance of Blue Devils captain and keeper Tony Giannasca who had another outstanding game that prevented the score line from becoming embarrassing for the home side.

Both teams started strongly and Belconnen's Jaime Mauro and Bonnyrigg's Robert Gomez both had shots from 30 meters just tipped over in the opening five minutes.

Bonnyrigg opened the scoring after nine minutes when David Reid's first time volley from a corner flew into the goal from just inside the penalty area to give the White Eagles a 1-0 lead.

It should have been two nil after 27 minutes when Reid crossed to Gomez a metre out from an open goal.

Fortunately for the Blue Devils he tripped at the vital moment completely missing the ball to be left red faced.

Gomez's embarrassment did not last long when he slammed home Bonnyrigg's second goal two minutes before the half time.

Reid got in behind the defence and crossed to Colin Luff who's neat flick beat Giannasca and left Gomez to score to give Bonnyrigg a well deserved 2-0 lead at the break.

Five minutes after the break Blue Devils substitute Josh Whittington came forward from defence and forced Bonnyrigg keeper Fernando Greco into making another fine save after he shot from the edge of the penalty area

In the 55th minute Bonnyrigg made it 3-0 when Gomez crossed to Javier Mancino whose contested header fell to Luff who slammed the ball home from close range.

Giannasca showed why he is one of the leading keepers in the competition when he twice denied Gomez the chance to extend Bonnyrigg's lead from one on ones in the 58th and 64th minutes.

The Blue Devils came to life in the 67th minute when Leo Langone crossed to Steve Lazzari, who bravely headed the ball off the foot of a Bonnyrigg defender and into the net to make it 3-1.

A minute later Belconnen were almost in again when Lazzari opened up Bonnyrigg's defence when he flicked the ball to Matt Jullienne on the edge of the area, but his shot was deflected over.

In the first minute of stoppage time Belconnen were given a potential life line when they were awarded a penalty after Stewart Van Bentum handled they ball in the area.

Lazzari stepped up and sent keeper Greco the wrong way to score his ninth goal of the season.

However, any hope the Blue Devils had of earning an unlikely draw were snuffed out two minutes later when Borislav Dragas crossed to Van Bentum at the far post and his first time volley rocketed past Giannasca and nearly through the net to give Bonnyrigg a convincing 4-2 victory.

Belconnen must now regroup after two consecutive defeats before they take on Canterbury Marrickville at Henson Park next week while Bonnyrigg are at home to the struggling Sutherland Sharks.

Belconnen 2 (Lazzari 67m, 91m pen)
Bonnyrigg 4 (Reid 9m, Gomez 43m, Luff 55m, Van Bentum 93m)
Attendance: 420
Venue: Greenway Oval Tuggeranong
Referee: Ben Williams
Belconnen: Giannasca, Manson (Schroder 79m) Cachia, Pietrukowski, Unwin (Whittington 45m), Mauro, Zamora, Langone, Lazzari, Cattanach (Jullienne 45m) Jenkins
Bonnyrigg: Greco, Utjesenovic, Warburton, Devrimol, Mancino, Harding, Luff, Gomez (Ghisso 79m), Hawrysiuk (Van Bentum 84m), Reid (Dragas 88m) Huseyin
Cautions: Reid 48m, Warburton 72m

ROUND 2 RE-SCHEDULED MATCH

Karavatakis Tiger double sets up Saints rout

By Stuart Veitch.

LEICHHARDT TIGERS 4
ST GEORGE 0

Leichhardt Tigers finally displayed the form that has so far eluded them with an emphatic 4-0 win against a disappointing St George.

All four goals came in the space of 20 minute purple patch in which the Tigers caught their opponents flat-footed to run riot mid-way through the second half.

While Saints attacker and former Tiger Leon Alexiou shocked Leichhardt when his sharp strike soon after kickoff cannoned off the upright, there was little to trouble the Tigers defence from then on.

The first half – a scrappy and physical affair with a hint of spite at times - was played almost entirely in St George's half with Leichhardt denying the Saints midfielders the time to create opportunities in attack, and harrying them into giving up possession.

As occurred the last time these teams met, the Tigers wasted most of their chances once they did get behind the Saints defence, although Alogdellis did a fantastic job to deflect a Karavatakis missile aimed at just inside his near post.

Saints coach John Sentas was pleased to go into the break on even terms, hoping to move up a gear in the second stanza.

But it was not to be. After a quarter hour, Karavatakis distracted Chris Kalantzis with a run wide on the right, allowing Stubbs-Mills a clear inside run on goal.

With time to spare he placed a perfectly weighted pass at the feet of an unmarked Michael Galluzzo, who made no mistake from 10 yards.

Just eight minutes later, Matthew Borg took on the Saints defence, barging into the box, and may have scored himself, when Steve Karavatakis nipped in on a slightly overplayed final touch to finish the job with a first time left footer.

By this time the Saints defence was in disarray, which is an open invitation to the likes of Steve Karavatakis.

He gratefully lodged his second for the night at 76 mins after a Sam LaRocca cross found him with plenty of room in the box.

Matthew Borg completed the goal feast four minutes later when, in a move reminiscent of their time together at Fairfield Bulls, Sam LaRocca fired in a firmly struck cross for Borg to strike home with a lightning fast header that hardly gave Saints keeper Stacy Alogdellis an instant to react.

NSW Premier League - Round 2 (Tues 5 December)
Leichhardt Tigers 4 (Galluzzo 60', Karavatakis 68' and 76', Borg 80')
St George Saints 0
Venue: Lambert Park
Referee: Boyd McGregor
Leichhardt Tigers: Anastasiadis, Stubbs-Mills , Luksic, Galluzzo, Tomasevic (78' Tesoro), Bruni, Karavatakis, Lal, LaRocca, Nicol, Fuchs (52' Borg).
St. George Alogdellis, Markopoulous, Kladis, Verrender (75' Sevares), Maglis, Petratos, Alexiou, Kalantzis, Polymenakis (82' Zabetakis), Campbell (60' Papageorgiou).
Cautions: Verrender.

PREMIER LEAGUE ACTION

PENRITH PANTHERS SOCCER CLUB

Saturday December 16
NEPEAN RUGBY CLUB
V
ST GEORGE SAINTS

First Grade Kick Off 7pm
Under 19s Kick Off 5pm

Penrith Panthers proudly sponsored by
PANTHERS WORLD OF ENTERTAINMENT
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TAFE AT WERRINGTON

ASICS PREMIER LEAGUE BIG MATCH REPORT

Late draw for Saints

By Mark Fowler

BLACKTOWN CITY 2
ST GEORGE 2

A LATE, late equaliser by Angelo Petratos saw St George become the first team to prevent Blacktown picking up maximum points this season.

Pushed forward by coach John Sentas, Petratos notched his third goal of the season with a superb header from a Nick Polimenakos cross that hit the underside of the crossbar and went in.

It was no more than the Saints deserved in an enjoyable encounter.

They were on the back foot early in the game, and two efforts by Demons leading scorer Darren Iocca showed all his quality.

After just four minutes his snap shot from 20 metres out was tipped over by Stacy Alogdelis, and then after juggling the ball over his marker he fired an effort just wide minutes later.

Damien Foxe then had a glorious chance when a free kick from the left saw him with a free header, but although it contained power it went straight at Alogdelis.

With their first effort on goal though, St George scored.

Bill Petrovski, who had a super game, surged forward from midfield after the Demons had given the ball away, and slipped a pass through to George Maglis at exactly the right time.

Maglis, another player to have a fine game, fired home easily from around 15 metres, showing some confidence with his finish.

That misplaced pass set the tone for the rest of the half for the Demons, who suddenly found themselves unable to get any sort of fluency in their game.

They weren't helped by first half injuries to Ben Willard and Zac Donev that saw them replaced, but when you can bring on players of the quality of Paul Dee and Jason Connolly there is little excuse.

One player who did stand out in the first half for Blacktown was Latvian sweeper Vadim Mikoutski, and the decision by coach Brian Brown to push him further forward proved to be decisive.

Getting a header in against Blacktown, Nick Bolianitis

He was involved in the first goal, and when Alogdelis' clearance screwed off the side of his boot Connolly played a through-ball.

When it was cut back to Iocca he had the easy chance of levelling the scores, which he did on 71 minutes.

After being forced back and back in the second period the goal seemed to spur St George on, and Petrovski had a good effort sail just wide.

Two minutes later though the Demons were ahead with a wonderful team goal.

Connolly again played his part with a ball down the line, but it was the running and vision of Mikoutski that made it, and his ball across to Iocca saw him have a little more to do to finish than his first goal.

He did it with the confidence though of a man only headed by one other player in the league in goals scored.

At that stage all money was on Blacktown, until Petratos popped up with his last-gasp equaliser.

There was still time for Foxe, who started in an unaccustomed wing-back role, to be sent off for hauling back an opponent, but there was no time for the Saints to try and make good their extra man advantage.

Blacktown coach Brian Brown said afterwards: "In training on Thursday night we were superb... and tonight we weren't.

"Our passing was simply terrible, and I have to say I am not disappointed with the result, but am with the performance.

"It's a shame we played that way in front of a decent home crowd."

Saints coach John Sentas, who'd joked before the game that Blacktown were 'struggling a bit' (played 5, Won 5) said: "I thought we had them at one stage.

"The thing with Blacktown though is they have great heart, and they just never gave in.

"I told the boys at half time two things – not to give any fouls away, and that Mikoutski would be pushed forward.

"Yet we gave a lot of fouls away and didn't deal with Mikoutski.

"It's good for us though as there has been questions asked about the boys fitness, and I hope getting a last-minute equaliser will answer some of those questions."

Blacktown 2 (Iocca 71', 77')
St George 2 (Maglis 16', Petratos 90')
Gabbie Stadium, 10 December
Crowd: 400
Referee: Greg Leverton
Blacktown: Crawley, Yates, Gatt, Foxe, Willard (Dee 30') Mikoutski, Sermanni, Langan, Angievski (Riches 68') Donev (Connolly 38') Iocca Subs not used: Racker, Wilkinson.
Cautions: Mikoutski Red card: Foxe
St George: Alogdelis, Maglis, Bolianitis, Kladis, Verrender, Petrovski (Campbell 85') Petratos, Alexiou (Polimenakos 63') Leris (Markopoulos 80') Papageorgiou, Sevares SUBS NOT USED: Nelson

Stubborn Panthers defy Tiger strike force

By Stuart Veitch

LEICHHARDT TIGERS 0
PENRITH PANTHERS 0

PENRITH Panthers defied expectations by holding an in-form Leichhardt Tigers to a scoreless draw in their Round 6 clash at Lambert Park. The smiles in the Panthers camp after the game were in contrast to the grimaced looks on the faces of Tigers players and staff.

Penrith deserved its share of the points, demonstrating that in football a stubborn and resolute attitude can prevail against an opponent's superior football pedigree, although the Tigers will be kicking themselves for not taking all three points.

After cruising through the first half, with LaRocca and Stubbs-Mills dominating possession in acres of space in the midfield, it seemed inevitable that the Tigers would step up a gear and demolish their opponents after the break.

However, it was not to be, with Leichhardt playing as if a goal would inevitably result through the sheer volume of half chances, and rarely taking the care to create something more substantial.

When they did, Penrith were up to the task, with young second-string keeper Chad Taylor delighting coach Stan Ackerly with a number of excellent saves.

The first and best of these came 10 minutes after the restart when he got a hand to a close-range Matthew Borg rocket aimed just inside his near post.

Shortly after, Stubbs-Mills found Karavatakis with a long cross from the right, and just as it seemed the Panthers keeper was caught in no-mans land, he flung up a hand to deflect Karavatakis' header over the bar.

Penrith too had a couple of opportunities to score, with Danny Hinton sending an overhead kick tantalisingly close to Shaun Woods' far post, and the Panthers best outfielder of the evening, midfielder Paul Marosevic, failing to hit the target after finding himself unmarked at the back post from a long cross by Martin Driene.

The last quarter hour saw Penrith become more and more protective of their unlikely point, as all players defended their back third, and possession consisted of a hefty upfield punt.

Substitute Con Siciliano could have stolen all three points for the Panthers with five minutes to go, when he latched onto one such long ball on the break, and struck low to the far post, but was denied by an advancing Woods who got down smartly to his left.

After the game, Panthers coach Stan Ackerly was understandably pleased.

"We played how we wanted to, catching them on the counter-attack, and making them shoot from a distance".

He was full of praise for his squad of mainly local youngsters, predicting "we will take more points than we lose from here on".

Leichhardt coach Les DeCelis was "disappointed and frustrated" that two of the competition's leading goalscorers (in Borg and Karavatakis) could not score, particularly after their mid-week haul against St George.

Leichhardt Tigers 0
Penrith Panthers 0
Venue: Lambert Park
Leichhardt: Woods, Luksic, Galluzzo, Tomasevic (Adioski 77'), Nicol, Bruni, Stubbs-Mills, LaRocca, Borg, Lal, Karavatakis
Cautions: Borg 81'.
Penrith: Taylor, Cleary, Wright, R Casserly, Jones, Hinton (S Casserly 75'), M Driene, A Driene, Marosevic, Sciberas (Hawkins 68'), El Ali (Siciliano 80')
Cautions: A Driene 35'.

Eagles whitewash depleted Berries

By Ben Clark

Canterbury Marrickville came to Melita Stadium under a cloud of controversy which played a major part in the way that this match unfolded.

The Canterbury Marrickville line-up included only a handful of regular players.

The remainder was made up of the reserves, a few of which had played in the earlier match.

Canterbury Marrickville played well under the circumstances, but were overpowered by a well organised Eagles outfit.

Canterbury Marrickville had some good patches with quick counter attacking moves, particularly through Guerrero, who used his pace well on the left wing.

For the most part the visitors were restricted to defending wave after wave of Parramatta attacks.

The first goal came quickly from one of many runs by Daniel Mullins down the left.

He found himself in space in the 18 yard box and cut the ball back from the by-line.

Nikolce Jocevski reacted quickly and side-footed the ball home through a crowded penalty area.

The second half started positively for Canterbury Marrickville, but this was short lived and Parramatta resumed the onslaught on the visitor's goal.

As in the first half, the Eagles had many opportunities, particularly from the smart passes and touches of Balla Conde.

The second goal came from a corner which was whipped to the far post and Cummins climbed well to power an uncontested header into the roof of the net.

The third goal came as a tiring Canterbury Marrickville defence left Anderson alone out on the left, who took a few touches and then beat the keeper with a powerful shot from inside the 18 yard box.

Parramatta Eagles 3 (N Josevski 7m, D Cummins 52m, A Anderson 87m)
Canterbury Marrickville 0
Parramatta Eagles: J Holmes, D Bowe, M Meilak, M Revely, T Bazdaric (S Chipps 85m), M O'Shea, T Mittiga, N Josevski (A Anderson 70m), B Delicata, D Cummins, Balla Conde (M Beldham 70m)
Cautions: 1 (Balla Conde 67m)
Canterbury Marrickville: F Mikuletic, A Varhas, M Guerrero, T Katahas, B Silva, X Talcevski, S Christofiridis, A Kotsopoulos, T Siderato, N Alemis, S Holmes (T Atsas 45m)
Cautions: 1 (S Christofiridis 23m)

PREMIER LEAGUE FIXTURES

BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES
First-Grade:
1. Fernando Greco
2. Sasha Utjesenovic
3. James Warburton
4. Borislav Dragas
5. Tayfun Devrimol
7. Javier Mancino
8. David Harding
9. Colin Luff
11. Johnny Ghisso
13. Robert Gomez
14. Leigh Gunn
15. Stewart Van Bentum
16. Michael Hawrysiuk
18. Rajko Mandic
22. David Reid
23. Devrim Huseyin
20. Trinity Allen
Coach: Doug Utjesenovic

Under-19: 2. Uros Vukelic 3. Daniel Kaluderovic 4. Garth Moring 5. Alex Arregin 6. Zeljko Gusa 7. Abraham Aroyan 8. Stavros Arzapitian 9. Daniel Borg 10. Darrell Fernandes 11. Bill Panoutsopoulos 12. Daniel McCann 13. Ryan O'Shea 14. Richard Minvielle 15. Daniel Koziow 16. Matthew Pearman Coach: Danny Blanusa

BONNYRIGG
v
SUTHERLAND SHARKS
Saturday 16 December
Serbian Centre
1st Grade Kick Off 7pm
Youth Grade Kick Off 5pm

SUTHERLAND
First-Grade:
1. Daniel Farias
2. Tony Judge
3. Jeremy Pettenon
4. Sean Robertson
5. Alen Stajcic
6. Pat Darvill
7. Jason Baron
8. Paul Donnelly
9. Grant McDonald
10. Ian McDonald
11. Grant Bard ©
12. Ahmed Ibrahim
13. Dean Spresian
14. Goce Trposki
15. Anthony Kanaan
16. Colin McAusland
17. Dejan Ristovski
18. Chris Zelvis
20. Peter Pullicino
22. Leo Premutičo
Coach: Billy McColl

Under-19: 1. Adam Kurtz 2. Leigh Magri 3. Scott Allison 4. Nathan Trajcevski 5. Matteo Maiorana 6. Mathew Toogood 7. Ben Kasznik 8. Sefir Yildiz 9. Chris Velovski 10. Kris Karanasos 11. Matthew Parker 12. Ray Kelly 13. Stuart Southall 14. Carlo Musumeci 15. Marino Musumeci 16. George Galouzis 17. Andrew Wales 18. Matthew Said Coach: Alex Baird

CANTERBURY-MARRICKVILLE
First-Grade:
41. Jose Bello Amigo
2. Michael Raeburn
3. Mark D'Alessandro
4. Greg Collins
5. Jose Mendes
6. Matthew Percy
7. Con Paradisis
8. Fernando Pelegrino
9. Steve Christoforidis
10. Jim Nikas
11. Angelo Markopoulos
12. Terry Sidiratos
13. Eric Mexis
14. Paul Gaffney
15. Adrian Molachino
16. Simon Fedele
17. Jim Corbo
18. John Kyriazopoulos
19. Scott Wells
1. Steve Angelov
Coach: Jim Ziras

Under-19: 1. Phillip Zabaks 2. Menelaos Kallianis 3. Con Tsiounis 4. Christos Dimitriou 5. Antony Mersiades 6. Arthur Kavgas 7. Andrew Vrahas 8. Marcelo Guerrero 9. Mark Baric 10. Scott Holmes 11. Bruno Silva 12. David Cavaco 13. Evan Hatziantoniou 14. Matias Gulle 15. Themis Kalathas 16. Jonathan Vavasis 20. Tristan Tulloch Coach: George Mexis

CANTERBURY MARRICKVILE
v
BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS
Saturday 16 December
Henson Park
1st Grade Kick Off 6.30pm
Youth Grade Kick Off 4.30pm

BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS
First-Grade:
1. Tony Giannasca
2. Scott Manson
3. Matt Cachia
4. Lee Pietrukowski
5. Craig Unwin
6. Jaime Mauro
7. Oscar Zamora
8. Leo Langone
9. Steve Lazzari
10. George Cattanach
11. Geoff Howarth
12. Robert Schroder
13. Josh Whittington
14. John Rakic
15. Mark Jenkins
18. Matt Julienne
20. Chris Freeman
Coach: Lino Fiorese

Under-19: 1. Chris Freeman 2. Greg Ralston 3. Karl Varley 4. Edward Harris 5. Sam Mehr 6. Trent Exposito 7. Seb Rizzo 8. Richard Pietrukowski 9. Michael Percival 10. Clinton Larfield 11. Brad Smith 12. David Selby 13. Simon Lloyd 14. Steve Lee 16. Paul Gagetti 20. Michael Thomsen 21. Rhys Turner Coach: Paul Ontong

PENRITH PANTHERS
First-Grade:
22. Ivan Necevski
2. Paul Cleary
3. Steve Sweeney
4. Kaan Davies
5. Ben Wright
6. Jason Sciberras
7. Bob Casserly
8. Ryan Jones
9. Danny Hinton
10. Martin Driene
11. Chris Ackerley
12. Simon Casserly
13. Scott Ashton
14. Shane Hammond
15. Anthony Driene
16. Jon Hawkins
17. Sandro Borsato
18. Jon Grima
19. Con Siciliano
20. Osvaldo El Ali
21. Alan Worobiej
24. Chad Taylor
Luke Boyd
Dave Gardiner
Tim O'Connell
Coach: Stan Ackerley
Under-19: 1. Chad Taylor 2. Gus Orcajo 3. Dale Fillingham 4. Daniel Wells 5. Shannon King 6. Mark Mijas 7. David Gardiner 8. Craig Speechley 9. Omar Makki 10. Luke Boyd 11. Tim O'Connell 12. Naj Haddid 13. Jason Sciberras 14. Simon Emmanuel 15. Matthew Sutton 17. Brett Eldridge 18. Scott Tyrrell 23. Owen Rogers Coach: Jose D'jalo

PENRITH PANTHERS
V
ST GEORGE
Saturday 16 December
Andrews Road Field
1st Grade Kick Off 7pm
Youth Grade Kick Off 5pm

St GEORGE
First-Grade:
1. Stacy Alogdellis
2. George Maglis
3. Nick Boliantitis
4. Archileas Markopoulos
5. Michael Kladis
6. Simon Verrender
7. George Zabetakis
8. Bill Petrovski
9. Angelo Petratos
10. Leon Alexiou
11. Chris Kalantzis
12. Nick Polimenakos
13. Mirak Bacek
14. Mark Bariamis
15. Steve Papadopoulos
16. Alex Leris
17. Emmanuel Papageorgiou
18. Bradley Campbell
19. Daisuke Nakayama
21. Max Sevares
22. David O'Han
23. Jamie Danaskos
Coach: John Sentas
Under-19: 1. Murray Nelson 2. Bill Madonis 3. Mark Stavroulakis 4. Tim Jesus 5. Joe Lempriere 6. Paulo Oliveira 7. Misko Pokrajac 8. Mark Guerreiro 9. Mohamed El-Reda 10. Joe Dia 11. Stane Pokrajac 12. Robert Tassone 13. Peter Andriotis 26. Stewart Vella Coach: Ian Gillan

CENTRAL COAST COASTIES
FIRST-GRADE:
1. Matthew Collitts
2. Mitchell Daley
3. Marcus Steele
4. Sean Matthews
5. Dane Hokin
6. Steve Cutler
7. Adam Peatey
8. Shane Knight
9. Nathan Byrn
10. Mick Williams
11. Peter Ritchie
12. Cal Roper
13. David Anderson
15. Peter Leary
16. Ryan Marshall
17. Rod Hutchinson
18. Daniel Surridge
19. Stuart Sontag
22. Darren Moore
Coach: Dale Eggleton
Asst Coach: Andrew Ollier

Under-19: 1. Scott Horvat 2. Scott Jones 3. David Brewer 4. Nathan Carmody 5. Michael Cook 6. Mark Falzon 7. Jason Donnelly 8. Justin Selkirk 9. Jason McMinimee 10. Reece Lewin 12. Daniel Surridge 13. Clint Smith 14. Peter Preston 15. David Anderson 16. Mick Coates 19. Stuart Sontag Coach: John McClafferty

CENTRAL COAST
v
BLACKTOWN CITY
Friday 15 December
Woy Woy
1st Grade Kick Off 8pm
Youth Grade Kick Off 6pm

BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS
1. John Crawley
2. Paul Yates
3. Jason Connolly
4. Peter Sermanni
5. Chris Bradley
6. Damon Langan
7. Paul Dee
8. Mark Racker
9. Jim Aschner
10. Vadim Mikoutski
11. Damien Foxe
12. Zlatko Donev
13. Steve Riches
14. Ben Willard
15. Darren Iocca
16. Patrick Gatt
17. Joshua Maguire
18. Adam Kwasnik
19. Robert Angievski
20. James Wilkinson
Coach: Brian Brown

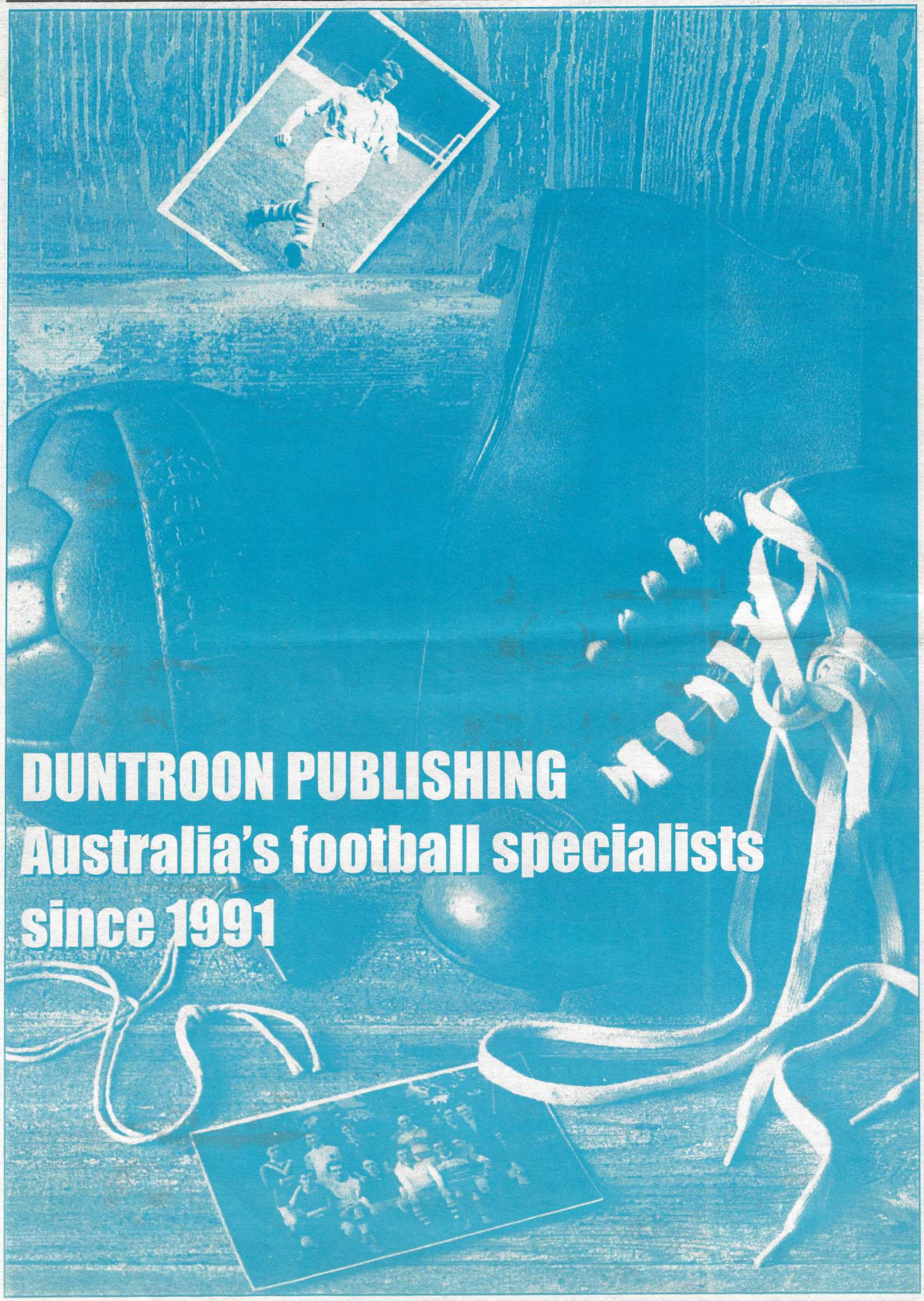
Under-19: 20. James Wilkinson 21. Brett Mason 22. Ryan Noble 23 Feruccio Hanza 24. Steve Baveas 25. Chad Lewis 26. Roger Galayini 27. Gokhan Ada 28. Scott Milne 29. Anthony Ucchino 33. Nelson McLaughlin 40. Kurt Van Arkells
Coach: Tom McMorrow

LEICHHARDT TIGERS
First-Grade:
1. Shaun Woods
2. Fabio Macolino
3. Blago Milicevic
4. Richard Luksic
5. Michael Galluzzo
6. Vuko Tomasevic
7. Joe Bruni
8. James Stubbs-Mills
9. Steve Karavatakis
10. Matthew Borg
11. Sam La Rocca
12. Andrew Nicol
13. Andrew Falas
14. Zoki Adioski
15. Greg Fuchs
16. Tony Tesoro
17. Jason Lal
18. Daniel Ucchino
19. Andrew Nolan
20. Luke Tomic
21. John Paul Boutros
22. Joshua Bulgin
30. Con Anastasiadis
Coach: Les DeCelis
Under-19s: 1. Cameron Moore 2. Paul Nicolaou 3. Liam Cameron 4. Daniel Cunningham 5. Moussa Chahine 6. Joseph Ciano 7. Daniel Coluccio 8. Tom Quilty 9. Michael O'Riley 10. Francesco Zarrella 11. Peter Talcevski 12. Josh De'Kelly 13. Robert Campagna 14. Mark Catelli 15. Garry Van Diggele Coach: John Romeo

LEICHHARDT TIGERS
V
PARRAMATTA EAGLES
Sunday 16 December
Lambert Park
1st Grade Kick Off 7pm
Youth Grade Kick Off 5pm

PARRAMATTA MELITA EAGLES
First Grade
1. Jason Holmes
2. Daniel Borg
3. Geoffrey Dwyer
4. Malcolm Meilak
5. Mark Reveley
6. Tom Bazdaric
7. Matthew O'Shea
8. Alex Trpkoski
9. Adam Anderson
10. Anthony Mittiga
11. Nikolce Joseski
12. George Wakim
13. Mauricio Islas
14. Stephen Chipps
15. Ben Delicata
16. Danial Cummins
17. Ballamodou Conde
18. Sung Jin Kim
19. Mark Beldham
22. Michael Xuereb
Coach: Tam Finlayson Asst Coach: John Calleja, Don Allan

Under-19 Ben Xerri Andrew Gaddes Nathan Spinks Robert Marangon Simon Zahra Mark Lancaster Gregory Jackson Stephen Neligan Michael Sowato Michael Debono Alex Muscat Adam Mansueto Alioune Ndiaye Coach: Victor Ellul



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